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Bee health

HST or democracy

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Selling Sickness redux

Neil Postman 25 years later

Informing ourselves to life

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Contributors:
Robert Alstead, Steve Anderson, Sherry Baker, Alan Cassels, Henry Cloud, Adrien Dilon, Carolyn Herriot, Ezra Manson, Vesanto Melina, Faisal Moola, Geoff Olson, Gwen Randall-Young, Joseph Roberts, Lucy Sharratt, David Suzuki, Eckhart Tolle, Rita Wong

Sales - Head office 604-733-2215
toll-free 1-800-365-8897

Contact Common Ground:
Phone: **604-733-2215**
Fax: 604-733-4415
Advertising: joanne@commonground.ca
adam@commonground.ca
Editorial: editor@commonground.ca

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Two wrongs don't make a right

Harper and Campbell tried to harmonize their financial blunders

WRITING ON THE WALL by Joseph Roberts

Two wrongs don't make a right, but this is how Harper and Campbell tried to harmonize their blunders so voters wouldn't notice or find out.

The first big error occurred when the Conservatives cut the GST from seven percent to five percent, which gutted the feds' most profitable margin for tax collection. They did it because they wanted to look good ideologically by appearing to lower taxes. What looked good at first soon became a fiscal disaster.

The feds were short of money, and not wanting to look stupid, they couldn't just say, "Sorry, we screwed up and we need to put the GST back to seven percent, or maybe even eight or nine percent to make up for lost tax revenues." No, no, that would be really bad for their image, so they searched for a new idea to get tax monies without it looking like it had anything to do with the GST. They came up with a new tax scheme called the Harmonized Sales Tax. The newly minted tax HST would not look or sound like the GST (though they do rhyme). They would pitch it to the provinces and offer them an incentive in the form of transition funding (some call it a bribe). But first the feds would need to find provinces in desperate need of money in order to get them to hand over their tax power to the federal government.

Alberta turned them down even though that is where Stephen Harper got his start in politics. Manitoba said no. Saskatchewan dabbled, then tossed the HST out. The Maritimes, desperate for cash, bit the bait in 1996. Their HST bounced around from 13 percent to where it sits now at 15 percent, but that is another story. Quebec said (screw off) *non.* But there were two provinces left: BC and Ontario, each with massive debt. Premier Dalton McGuinty shoved through Ontario's HST at 13 percent faster than voters could get organized to fight it, with the exception of the First Nations, who are still opposed.

BC was reeling from the Olympic debt hangover even though MLA's wages kept going up. But they couldn't let the voters know they had blown their budget. It would have been political suicide before the election to tell voters they would be bringing in a new tax (i.e. hiders make liars). So they packaged the Olympics to look like a moneymaker, which it wasn't, and didn't *cont'd page 28...*

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Amusing ourselves to death, informing ourselves to life

The 25th anniversary of Neil Postman's best-known work

by Geoff Olson

Photography is going to marry Miss Wireless and heaven help everybody when they get married. Life will be very complicated. – Marcus Adams, Society photographer, in the *Observer*, 1925.

CRITICIZING television is a mug's game. All you need is a working set and an electrical outlet and you can mutter away to your heart's content. But no one ever took apart the television medium with as much insight and flair as the late media critic Neil Postman. This fall marks the 25th anniversary of his seminal book, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business,* a slim volume of acid prose and razor-sharp thinking.

"Our politics, religion, news, athletics, education and commerce have been transformed into congenial adjuncts of show business, largely without protest or even much popular notice," the New York University scholar wrote. "The result is that we are a people on the verge of amusing ourselves to death."

On one hand, it seems there's little practical benefit in criticizing commercial television for being what it is. You can't criticize a great white shark for being a man-eater (as I learned during Shark Week on the Discovery Channel). But, on the other hand, you can't go wrong knowing how and why we are manipulated daily by a conga line of talking heads. *Amusing Ourselves to Death* was, if nothing else, a great primer on intellectual self defence. But how well has it stood the test of time?

Drawing upon and extending the ideas of Canadian communications guru Marshall McLuhan, Postman argued that a given medium can only hold a certain level of ideas. Rational argument fares better in a print-based medium than in an image-based medium, he claimed. The culture of print, which presumes literacy and the time to read, is being undermined by the quick-edit culture of television, which appeals to sensation and emotion. By its very nature, the medium conflates information and entertainment and turns public discourse into a spectator sport, full of sound and fury and signifying ratings.

"Television screens saturated with commercials promote the utopian and childish idea that all problems have fast, simple, and technological solutions," the author wrote. "You must banish from your mind the naive but commonplace notion that commercials are about products. They are about products in the same sense that the story of Jonah is about the anatomy of whales." Commercial television is about mythmaking, he insisted, and politicians campaigning on television are branded products, just like automobiles or dishwasher detergent.

I was fortunate enough to briefly meet with the author after he lectured in Vancouver in 2001. In his gravelly Brooklynese, he told me McLuhan once advised him he should analyze media dispassionately, without moralizing. Postman said he had a good response to his colleague's advice: "Bullshit, Marshall."

"I believe the epistemology created by television not only is inferior to a print-based epistemology but is dangerous and absurdist," he argued in *AOTD.* This 1985 jeremiad against the tube encouraged a lot of readers, including artists and musicians, to look at the 'Thing in the Living Room Corner' in an entirely new way. The book inspired Roger Waters' 1992 caustic concept album, *Amused to Death*, which Postman said "raised his prestige" among undergraduates.

AOTD opens with the author brilliantly contrasting and comparing Aldous Huxley and George Orwell, who offered opposing visions for the future. Writing of Orwell's dystopian novel *1984,* Postman notes, "Orwell warns that we will be overcome by an externally imposed oppression. But in Huxley's vision, no Big Brother is required to deprive people of their autonomy, maturity and history. As he saw it, people will come to love their oppression, to adore the technologies that undo their capacities to think.

"Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information. Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism. Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance. Orwell feared we would become a captive culture. Huxley feared we would become a trivial culture, preoccupied with some equivalent of the feelies, the orgy porgy and the centrifugal bumblepuppy. As Huxley remarked in *Brave New World Revisited*, the civil libertarians and rationalists who are ever on the alert to oppose tyranny 'failed to take into account man's almost infinite appetite for distractions.' In *1984*, Huxley added, people are controlled by inflicting pain. In *Brave New World*, they are controlled by inflicting pleasure. In short, Orwell feared that what we hate will ruin us. Huxley feared that what we love will ruin us."

In *AOTD,* Postman focussed on the Huxleyan scenario and in the opening chapters he cited historical evidence for news consumers' shrinking attention spans. The author argued that the high literacy rate of 18th century New England exemplified a "typographical culture" that surpassed today in literary appreciation and depth. "When Charles Dickens visited America in 1842, his reception equalled the adulation we offer today to television stars, quarterbacks and Michael Jackson," Postman noted.

During one of the Lincoln-Douglas presidential debates, the audience sat listening for a total of seven hours, with only a break for dinner. Such focused public attention seemed unthinkable in 1985, and even more so in 2010 – if only because news consumers on both sides of the border have been stuffed to imbecility on the fast food model for information delivery. The big broadcasters want quick sound bites on their programming menu and this expectation put backwards pressure on politicians to sum up complex thoughts in a few seconds, Postman argued. This, in turn, encourages the public expectation of fast and simple from elected leaders.

Almost two decades ago, communication studies determined that candidate "sound bites" on network news programs had shrunk from more than 40 seconds during the 1960s to less than 10 seconds

in the 1980s. A 2007 study found that from 1992 through 2004, "the length of the average sound bite in these newscasts continued its decline, falling another 15% or so, down to 7.7 seconds."

"I have no objection to television junk. The best things on television are its junk, and no one and nothing is seriously threatened by it," Postman insisted. It's when citizens mistook television for a serious medium that concerned him. They end up duped into believing they are being informed, something that television, by it nature, could not do properly – certainly not when news topics are given a minute or less on the evening news. (Full disclosure: this writer's prime-time guilty pleasures include *Destroyed in Seconds* and *1001 Ways to Die.)*

However, there were some things about today's television that the sage of Brooklyn didn't – and couldn't – predict. In the past decade, 24-hour cable news outlets like Fox television cranked up 24-hour yammerfests, spewing right-wing talking points and waving bye-bye to the reality principle. Yet, over the same time period, dramatic television series like *Deadwood, Sopranos, Breaking Bad, Mad Men,* and *Six Feet Under* picked up the slack in truth-telling. These productions expertly dismantled American myths about cowboys, crime, drug use, the culture of advertising and the business of death.

The social criticism extended to television comedy with *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report*, "fake news" shows that lampoon the very media they are embedded in, employing the kind of clever savagery once reserved for critics like Postman. Documentaries on public television, like the investigative journalism of PBS' *Frontline*, CBC's *Passionate Eye* series and the now-defunct *Bill Moyers Journal* negate Postman's claim that television cannot by its nature offer an effective forum for serious topics.

I can imagine how Postman would have responded to the above. It's the very excellence of today's television entertainment and the Huxleyan upgrade of consumer technology to digital, high-definition delivery, wide-screen TVs and PVRs that keeps us glued to our couches, strangers to our neighbours and alienated from local community. As for any documentaries that air on publicly funded television, they are drowned in a "sea of irrelevance" with only a small fraction of the viewing public tuning in. Similarly, the 'fake news shows,' are marginalized onto the late-night schedule of cable television networks. The barbed quips bounce off the military-industrial-entertainment complex with barely a ding.

Postman insisted that commercial television degrades public discourse into show business and this thesis *has* held up over time. Consider the media spectacle during the Bush years when newscasters rubberstamped the fudged intelligence on Saddam's supposed "Weapons of Mass Destruction." War-as-entertainment had been beta-tested in the first Gulf War, but the second time around, the process was streamlined and digitized with glitzy graphics and CGI computer animations, conjuring up a fairy-tale world of brush-cut heroes and swarthy villains. Post-9/11, viewers have had the opportunity to believe, like Lewis Carroll's White Queen, in "six impossible things before breakfast," courtesy the news networks' cheerleading for the war on terror.

Postman would have not have blinked when Ad Age awarded Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign "marketer of the year" award, edging out runners-up Apple and Zappos.com. Television "junk" and "news" are two sides of the same commercial coin, minted in the foundries of corporate monopolies. And beginning in the nineties, junk and news fused into a non-stop circus of irrelevance, hosted by well-coifed anchorclowns. The signal moment came in 1994 when the 24-hour cable news shows broadcast, in real time, the low-speed police chase of a famous murder suspect in a white Ford Bronco. The OJ Simpson chase and subsequent trial became the template for two decades' worth of celebrity meltdown sideshows, from Anna Nicole Smith to Tiger Woods.

As Postman would have expected, commercial news broadcasting has not improved over time in handling uncomfortable truths – especially those that might offend corporate sponsors. Mainstream media outlets do not question the axioms of the establishment culture. They *are* the establishment culture. You can't criticize a mule for being sterile.

"The result of all this is that Americans are the best entertained but likely the least-informed people in the Western World," the author grimly observed. In the years since the publication of *AOTD,* American television has ascended new peaks of quality, even while descending to depths worthy of BP oil rigs (insert reality television program of your choice here). Little wonder I'm encountering more and more people who tell me they have pulled the plug entirely. For a generation under 30, the tube is a boomer's way of wasting time. Younger media consumers can waste their time more cheaply online and with far more interactive options. And that includes watching commercial-free TV programs, old and new, on the Internet.

Since Postman wrote his book, the centre of North American culture has shifted away from one-way broadcasting to interactive networking. But the sage of Brooklyn believed the democratic deficit that came bundled with television extended to other forms of consumer technology, an argument he detailed in his 1996 book *Technopoly*. Postman had no time for the Internet and proudly claimed he'd never been on it or even owned a computer for that matter. His only technical aid was a pencil, he repeated. Alas, the man's personal preference for graphite placed him conceptually somewhere between cuneiform and the *Book of Kells*. His ivory tower perspective of anything after Marconi led to a refusal to contaminate himself with the tools he ostensibly criticized. It was a bit like Aristotle attempting a treatise on outboard motor repair.

When Postman addressed the atomizing effects of communication technology, however, he turned out to be prescient. American viewers now watch an estimated 200 billion hours of TV every year and, in the digital age, the scale of Huxleyan distraction has increased dramatically with the emergence of wireless technology and portable electronic devices. Throughout any major North American city, cafes, public transit and streets are full of people lost in their personal worlds of surfing, texting and musical solipsism. Back at home, there's more of the same, with family members sequestered in separate rooms, consumed by social networking sites, video games and perhaps even online gambling and porn.

All this frantic digital activity has led to a global 'Tower of Babel,' a non-physical ziggurat of tweets, blogs and DIY videos, with terabytes of data added hourly. It has created a disembodied form of community, with no borders – a world in which the map *is* the territory.

"Print is now merely a residual epistemology, and it will remain so, aided to some extent by the computer, and newspapers and magazines that are made to look like television screens," the author prophesied in *AOTD*. The die-off of newspapers across the US in the past few years has done nothing to contradict the professor's assertion. Postman surely would have called attention to recent research suggesting our Pavlovian responses to social networking alerts and other digital attention-getters have deformed our capacity for close, sustained reading of text, both online and off. (The effect on spelling has been noted by many commentators.)

At the same time, sales of some electronic books are overtaking the sales of their print-based editions and libraries are seeing an explosion of interest in e-texts. The nature of reading has been altered by the new technologies, but it hasn't been extinguished. The gnomes of Silicon Valley are simply trying to find new ways to expand and exploit typographical culture, through devices like the Kindle and iPad.

"We are getting sillier by the minute," Postman wrote in 1985, and, by my calculations, by now we should all be in greasepaint and wearing size 23 shoes, laughing at holographic remakes of *The Three Stooges*. We're not, but it's not as if we're all following in the footsteps of Mr. Spock, either. In spite of all the alternative media to be found on the Internet and the vast explosion of *cont'd page 42…*

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Geoff Olson

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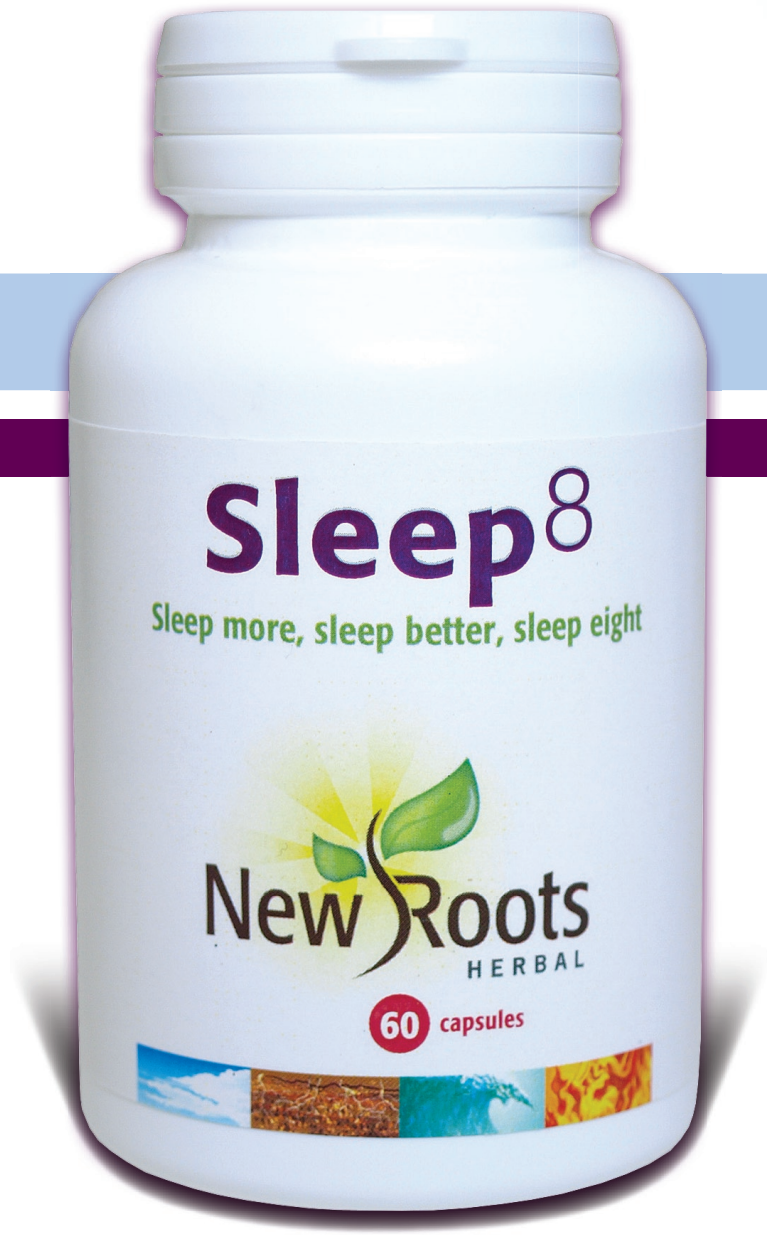

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Sumptuous sandwiches

NUTRISPEAK Vesanto Melina MS, RD

SOMEONE I know took a peanut butter sandwich in his lunch bag every day – for seven years. Then what happened? He didn't give up peanut butter, but when he finished school and got a job as a computer whiz, once in a while he ate a warm meal in the company cafeteria, to add a little variety.

Sandwiches are named after John Montagu, the 4th Earl of Sandwich (1718-1792), who enjoyed eating while he worked and played. To avoid dribbling meat drippings onto the work on his desk and his cribbage board, he had his valet contain the meat between two slices of bread. This Earl wasn't the inventor of the sandwich, though he seemed adept at getting things named after him. In his position as First Lord of the Admiralty, he supported Captain Cook's Pacific exploration and Cook subsequently named the Sandwich Islands in the Earl's honour. Just think, we might easily have been named Sandwichtown instead of Vancouver.

Variations of the hand-held lunch exist around the world. Asian versions include nori rolls, in which the wrap is a dried sheet of seaweed and rice paper wraps, which may contain rice, veggies and peanut sauce. In Mexican cuisine, we encounter corn or wheat tortillas as wraps for tasty fillings.

If you are facing months of bag lunches for yourself or your family members, check out the sidebar for some healthy ideas to make lunchtime more interesting. This is just a start. There are plenty of flavourful veggie "meats." Combine slices to make a 'Hero' and fill a fresh roll with guacamole. Spread rice cakes with a variety of nut butters, with or without jam.

Check out the vegetarian sandwich fillings at natural foods stores and mainstream supermarkets. On New Westminster's Columbia Street, a cute little market called Karmavore (www.karmavore.ca, 604.527.4212) offers a fascinating range of products from veggie meats and patés to the outstanding new Daiya cheese, which tastes good, melts and is soy and wheat-free. A favourite sandwich is the raw Tapenade Roll in a collard leaf at Gorilla Food on Vancouver's Richards Street.

An easy meal to take when flying out of YVR is a package of vegetarian nori rolls, complete with pickled ginger. You can find these at airport concessions across North America These rice rolls also work well in lunch bags for those with wheat and gluten sensitivities. Oh, and we forgot to list peanut butter in the sidebar!

Vesanto Melina is a dietitian and co-author of Becoming Vegetarian, Becoming Vegan, Raising Vegetarian Children, the Food Allergy Survival Guide, Becoming Raw *and the* Raw Food Revolution Diet. *For personal consultations, phone 604-882-6782 or visit www.nutrispeak.com*

Tempting sandwich fillings

Bread or Roll	Spread or filling	Veggies	Other spreads
Whole wheat sub	Veggie "ham", "Tofurkey" deli slices, Daiya cheese slices	Onions, shredded lettuce, cucumber, tomatoes, sprouts	Mustard, soy mayo
Rice paper wrap	Marinated tofu strips (from supermarket or homemade), rice	Shredded carrots, cucumber, lettuce, sprouts, sunflower seeds, chopped peanuts	Peanut sauce, plum sauce
Baguette or bagel	Sunflower seed paté, other veggie paté	Cucumber slices, onion, sprouts	Earth Balance buttery spread
Collard leaf or lettuce leaf	Avocado slices	Tomato slices, alfalfa sprouts	Olive tapenade, lemon tahini dressing
Sourdough roll	Veggie burger (hot or cold)	Lettuce, tomato, onion	mustard, ketchup, relish, Nayonnaise
Rye bread	Veggie "salami" or "deli slices"	Pickles or sauerkraut, onions, lettuce	Dijon mustard, soy mayo
Crusty roll	Veggie pizza pepperoni slices	Lettuce, black or green olives, tomatoes, onions, sliced green or red pepper	Soy mayo, Dijon mustard
Multigrain bread	Tofu "cream cheese," Sheese.	Lettuce, sprouts, tomato, cucumber	Earth Balance buttery spread
Whole wheat bread	Canadian veggie bacon, Daiya cheese slices	Tomato and onion slices	Olive oil brushed on outside of bread, sandwich browned in skillet on both sides.
Corn or wheat tortilla	Refried beans, shredded Daiya cheese	Roasted cashews and peanuts, sunflower sprouts, avocado slices, shredded carrots, green onions	Salsa
Pita bread	Hummus (home-made or from deli)	Diced tomato, onions, sprouts, olives, shredded romaine lettuce	

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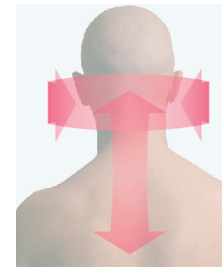

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Selling Sickness five years on

DRUG BUST *Alan Cassels*

HEALTH

IT WAS FIVE years ago this month that *Common Ground's* publisher Joseph Roberts asked me to write a column for his magazine. He tracked me down at a book festival at the Vancouver Public Library, as I was about to deliver a talk on my just-released book, *Selling Sickness*, which I co-wrote with Australian journalist Ray Moynihan. I accepted Joseph's offer, not really knowing what *Common Ground* readers were all about and whether or not they would appreciate my perspective.

Little did I know that conversation would result in the monthly column "Drug Bust," innumerable physicians who both praise and curse me when their patients say, "Look what this guy is saying about cholesterol" and the foundations of a new book. Sixty columns later, I'm still here, facing my five-year anniversary and reflecting on how the world – the pharmaceutical world in particular – has changed since 2005.

For those who haven't read *Selling Sickness: How the World's Biggest Pharmaceutical Companies Are Turning Us All Into Patients* (Greystone, 2005), let me recap the main point: the pharmaceutical industry, one of the most lucrative and successful industries in the history of the world, has shaped what we think about illness in order to sell treatments to the healthy and the well. Drug makers are big businesses employing top-flight marketers, prestigious thought leaders and genius tacticians whose goal is to create and sell the pills many of us swallow every day. Along the way, they sell something even more important: our modern notions of sickness and healthcare.

With examples drawn from the marketing tactics Ray and I documented in places like the *British Medical Journal* and CBC radio over 15 years, we enumerated the many arms of the pharmaceutical industry octopus, whose tentacles slither into places it has no right to be, all the while sucking and groping to give traction to an often lopsided, drug-centric view of modern healthcare.

Let me be clear; modern pharmaceuticals are often the right and most appropriate treatments for what ails many of us. They are frequently underused in patients who would really benefit from them. Ask any asthmatic or diabetic where they'd be without their puffer or their insulin. At times, prescription drugs are truly lifesaving. But they are also often grossly and inappropriately swallowed by many who stand little chance of benefiting from them and who instead are at great risk of real harm. Death by the injudicious use of drugs is common and our swallowing them, in many ways, makes us poorer.

Five years later, my goal in writing that book and this column has never changed: I want to help stoke the global conversation on disease mongering and get people to rethink their relationship with pharmaceutical care. I want to help right the information imbalances I see, which result in confused patients and bamboozled physicians, the main targets of pharma's incredible marketing muscle.

As a drug policy researcher, I am like a patient myself, but instead of drugs, I swallow large daily doses of evidence from studies, reports and analyses, many of which describe acts of deception and malfeasance that results in large numbers of people putting unnecessary pills into their mouths. And it makes me nauseous.

You might ask, "So why write, Alan? Why try to educate people? Isn't it futile?" If I knew of a better way to bring more muscle to ordinary people who are naked and defenceless in the pharmaceutical marketplace, I'd do that. As a chronicler of what I see, I have learned that information in the hands of people – good information, which is unbiased and straightforward about their drugs and their health care – can help steer people in the right direction. It can get them asking questions and build their powers of 'healthy skepticism.'

Selling Sickness documented pharma's many tentacles reaching into the public sphere: from the shaping of medical research to the biasing of academic medicine and the 'wining and dining' of doctors, to the courting of patient lobbyists and the corrupting influence of media and advertising. That book emerged at a point when there was evidence of a shift in the public consciousness about the pharmaceutical industry and we soon found our book had some company on the shelf. Marcia Angell's excellent *The Truth about the Drug Companies*, John Abramson's *Overdosed America* and Jerry Avorn's *Powerful Medicines* all spoke to the ranging power of this industry's tentacles. Yet five years on, have things changed?

I would say yes, there have been changes, but the pace of change has been glacial. Despite a raft of lawsuits, real efforts to bring balance to clinical research and more public attention to their nefarious tactics, the pharmaceutical industry continues to influence the pub-

lic, physicians and policymakers. Sadly, the tentacles of this empire continue to sell sickness through deception and fear, creating new markets for their products. The industry still spends billions per year marketing diseases and drugs, advertising through the power of television and the internet, inserting itself into medical decision-making bodies and bamboozling physicians by paying for their education.

And in some cases the outcomes are even worse than before. The prescribing of some of the world's most toxic prescription drugs – antipsychotics, for example – is truly horrifying as those drugs are prescribed for the very young and the very old with abandon. As more and more mental health issues are labelled as troubling, the use of antipsychotics continues to be so far out of line with rationality as to be frightening.

The number of children and adolescents treated for bipolar disorder in the US rose 40-fold between 1994 and 2003, due mainly to the fact that makers of the most expensive – and most marketed antipsychotics (drugs like Seroquel or Zyprexa) – are funding the further labelling of kids. One study found that nearly 20 percent of kids who visited a psychiatrist walked away with an antipsychotic drug prescription. And all this despite the known, serious dangers of those drugs, especially when taken by children.

In BC, *Common Ground's* home turf, there's a sea of examples demonstrating the power of the pharmaceutical industry is as strong as ever. Two years ago, the BC government created a Pharmaceutical Task Force to examine the workings of the public drug plan. It staffed it with a variety of pharma's lobbyists, including university and pharmaceutical company executives, people representing retail pharmacy and others who could be counted upon to deliver a report to serve the voracious appetite of the industry.

Among other things, the Task Force recommended dismantling the few bulwarks that exist in this province against the inappropriate marketing of disease and drugs. It put a bullet into the Therapeutics Initiative at UBC, one of the best organizations in the world providing unbiased assessments of the value of new drugs. The TI was a publicly financed body, essentially there to throw physicians, drowning in a sea of pharmaceutical spin, a lifeline. The government's and UBC's drug-addled response? Let'em sink.

The industry's influence on patients in BC continues in the form of the Better Pharmacare Coalition, a rag-tag collection of disease groups that pretend to be the voice of 'the people' on drug policies. Lately, they've morphed into a mouthpiece for the wretched Task Force and its silly recommendations. As an aside, if you are a member of any of the BPC's member organizations – the Arthritis Society, the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the MS Society, among others (check Google to find the full list) – you might want to ask yourself if you like your organization wearing woolly, sheep-like clothing for pharma's wolves.

The industry continues to fund "disease awareness" campaigns that fly under the radar of our laws against direct-to-consumer advertising of pharmaceuticals. These campaigns sound public spirited and helpful, as they implore people to go out and get their cholesterol or their blood sugars checked and be screened for diseases of all sorts using the omnipresent punch line: "See your doctor." Disease awareness campaigns that I have written often about in my "Drug Bust" columns have one key goal: to convince more and more of us to stop feeling healthy and start worrying. As the old saying goes, "If you feel healthy, it's only because you haven't had enough tests."

And trust me, when the industry is begging you to "see your doctor," it's because one of their reps has already 'seen' your doctor and they've given her the kind of advice that results in a "drug successful visit." (This is true pharma-salesmen lingo, by the way. They actually say this stuff.)

Ray and I may have been somewhat prophetic around disease mongering in the last chapter of *Selling Sickness* where we describe the ongoing campaign to get women to question their sexual health and to seek medical treatments for female sexual difficulties. In the rush to create the first version of "Pink Viagra," the pharmaceutical industry and its research tentacle is earnestly telling women this 'Big Lie:' disinterest in sex is a disease and we will soon have something to relieve your ills. Ray Moynihan has co-authored a book with UBC epidemiologist Barbara Mintzes entitled *Sex, Lies, & Pharmaceuticals*. It is due for release in October and I will be discussing the phenomenon in my column that month.

Clearly, five years on, there is still a lot of work to do. So when people ask me, "Alan Cassels, what are you doing to counter disease-mongering and the undue influence of the drug industry on the public, physicians and policymakers?" my answer remains the same: "I keep writing and speaking." There's still a lot of slippery tentacles that need to be exposed to the light of day.

My loyal "Drug Bust" readers should know that, in a previous life, I was a navy diver and I have had the opportunity to wrestle with octopi in 50 feet of water. They're wily creatures, but they can be outsmarted. The way it looks now, until the pharmaceutical industry puts a bullet in me, "Drug Bust" has a future.

Alan Cassels is a pharmaceutical policy researcher at the University of Victoria. ***October 16**: **Common Ground Special Ev**ents **presents** a talk and Q&A with Selling Sickness co-authors Ray Moynihan (author of the new book Sex, Lies & Pharmaceuticals) and Alan Cassels. Details TBA in our October issue.*

Brenda Watson's
Candida Protocol

When we talk about yeast overgrowth, what we are referring to is an imbalance of our body's healthy flora or beneficial bacteria. Yeast organisms are normally present in our intestinal tract in small amounts. However, this balance can easily be destroyed by things such as antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, birth control pills, poor diet, stress, and nutrient deficiencies. Here are just a few of the symptoms of Candida overgrowth:

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3.	Have you ever taken the Birth Control Pill?	❑ Yes	❑ No
4.	Do you crave sugar or eat it daily?	❑ Yes	❑ No
5.	Do you crave bread or eat it daily?	❑ Yes	❑ No
6.	Do you crave alcoholic beverages or drink them regularly?	❑ Yes	❑ No
7.	Do you have bloating, burping, or gas?	❑ Yes	❑ No
8.	Are you fatigued or get tired easily?	❑ Yes	❑ No

If you answered 'yes' to one or more of these questions, chances are you may have a problem with Candida. For more information visit your local health food store.

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Help bring the bees back

ON THE GARDEN PATH Carolyn Herriot

ORGANICS

THE HONEYBEE *Apis mellifera* was brought to North America by European colonists in 1662 to pollinate their crops. Before European honeybees were imported to North America, generations of growers depended upon the 4,000+ species of native bees that lived there. In Canada, there are 800 species of native bees. These bees do not live in communal hives; they are solitary, dwelling in little caves in the ground or in bark crevices in trees where they raise their young.

Today, more than 25 percent of North America's 2.4 million honeybee colonies have been lost to what has been named "colony collapse disorder." The bees are stressed by mites, viruses, toxic pesticides, long-distance trucking and poor nutrition. Hundreds of acres of mono-cultured crops do not provide the diversity of food they need to stay healthy. This has farmers worried about how they are going to get their crops pollinated in future.

The answer is right in front of them: if we returned to the smaller-scale, diversified food production model of our forbears, one that protected habitat such as hedgerows and ponds for wildlife, we would not be concerned about the failures of 'rent-a-bee' services.

There are 20,000 species of bees in the world, which means there are thousands of bees we know little about. In Victoria, BC, where I live, there are 30 species of native bees, which live in wild places such as salmonberry thickets, dead trees, decaying logs, riverbanks and abandoned railway corridors. The closer they are to a city, the more native bees are under threat, due to loss of habitat.

Here in Victoria, my friend Rex Welland spent many years studying native bees as a result of his interest in heritage fruit trees. He noticed that apples typically produce 10 to 20 seeds, depending on the variety. When he noticed that seed numbers had dropped in his fruit, he became concerned that bee populations were being negatively affected by mite infestations. He decided to try attracting native species of bees to increase the rate of pollination.

A bee box (with stackable trays) attracts solitary pollinating bees to the garden.

Today, more than 25 percent of North America's 2.4 million honeybee colonies have been lost to what has been named "colony collapse disorder."

Rex perfected a wooden bee box, with slotted trays that could be taken apart at the end of the season to clean pollen mites off the cocoons. Hatching unencumbered by mites enhances the adult bee's survival rate. In no time, the native blue orchard mason bee *Osmia lignaria* had located and moved into Rex's bee

boxes. This non-aggressive solitary bee is a shiny, blue-black colour and slightly smaller than a honeybee, making it easily mistaken for a bluebottle fly. There are 35 different species of orchard mason bees in North America.

This wood-dwelling bee emerges in early spring, at the same time as the early-flowering fruit trees that they pollinate. They forage under overcast skies at temperatures as low as 54°F (12°C). They are effective pollinators, visiting up to 2,000 blossoms a day. Effective pollination by mason bees does not require large populations; 50 bees can adequately pollinate a small orchard of a dozen trees.

Bees like to nest in a dry place protected from wind. Somewhere that receives morning sun that warms them up is best, such as under the eave on the southeast side of a house or shed. Orchard mason bees have a limited foraging range of 300 feet (90m) so place bee houses close to the area in need of pollination.

Studies have shown that they pollinate certain crops – apples, cherries, squash, watermelon, blueberries, sunflowers and cranberries – with greater efficiency than honeybees. It was shown that only 250 female orchard mason bees were needed to pollinate an acre of apples, when 15,000 honeybees would be needed to do the same job.

Females are the primary pollinators and the sole nest builders. Males also pollinate, but their foraging is done purely for nourishment. The female lays about 30 eggs in her lifetime, with activity ending in June. Within a week of laying the eggs, the larvae hatch and start feeding on stored nectar and pollen reserves. After two weeks, most of the food has been consumed so the larva spins a cocoon and pupates. Later in the summer, the pupa develops into the adult bee, which remains in the cocoon throughout winter, to emerge again the following spring.

Carolyn's new book The Zero Mile Diet – A Year-round Guide to Growing Great Organic Food *is now available (Harbour Publishing). http://earthfuture.com/gardenpath/*

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cannot tell the difference between an event and its reaction to that event. Every ego is a master of selective perception and distorted interpretation. Only through awareness – not through thinking – can you differentiate between fact and opinion. Only through awareness are you able to see – there is the situation and here is the anger I feel about it – and then realize there are other ways of approaching the situation, other ways of seeing it and dealing with it. Only through awareness can you see the totality of the situation or person instead of adopting one limited perspective.

lute truth and according to his version of it, those who wore glasses belonged to the educated class, the bourgeoisie, the exploiters of the peasants. They needed to be eliminated to make room for a new social order. His truth also was a bundle of thoughts.

There is only one absolute Truth and all other truths emanate from it. When you find that Truth, your actions will be in alignment with it. Human action can reflect the Truth or it can reflect illusion. Can the Truth be put into words? Yes, but the words are, of course, not it. They only point to it. The Truth is inseparable from who you are. Yes,

Forgiveness happens naturally when you see that it has no purpose other than to strengthen a false sense of self, to keep the ego in place. The seeing is freeing.

Beyond the realm of simple and verifiable facts, the certainty that "I am right and you are wrong" is a dangerous thing in personal relationships as well as in interactions between nations, tribes, religions, and so on. But if the belief "I am right; you are wrong" is one of the ways in which the ego strengthens itself, if making yourself right and others wrong is a mental dysfunction that perpetuates separation and conflict between human beings, does that mean there is no such thing as right or wrong behaviour, action or belief? And wouldn't that be the moral relativism that some contemporary Christian teachings see as the great evil of our times?

The history of Christianity is, of course, a prime example of how the belief that you are in sole possession of the truth, that is to say, right, can corrupt your actions and behaviour to the point of insanity. For centuries, torturing and burning people alive if their opinion diverged even in the slightest from Church doctrine or narrow interpretations of scripture (the "Truth") was considered right because the victims were "wrong." They were so wrong that they needed to be killed. The Truth was considered more important than human life. And what was the Truth? A story you had to believe in, which means a bundle of thoughts.

The one million people that mad dictator Pol Pot of Cambodia ordered killed included everybody who wore glasses. Why? To him, the Marxist interpretation of history was the abso-

you are the Truth. If you look for it elsewhere, you will be deceived every time. The very Being that you are is Truth. Jesus tried to convey that when he said, "I am the way and the truth and the life." These words uttered by Jesus are one of the most powerful and direct pointers to the Truth, if understood correctly. If misinterpreted, however, they become a great obstacle.

Jesus speaks of the innermost I Am, the essence identity of every man and woman, every life form, in fact. He speaks of the life that you are. Some Christian mystics have called it the Christ within; Buddhists call it your Buddha nature; for Hindus, it is Atman, the in-dwelling God. When you are in touch with that dimension within yourself – and being in touch with it is your natural state, not some miraculous achievement – all your actions and relationships will reflect the oneness with all life that you sense deep within. This is love. Laws, commandments, rules and regulations are necessary for those who are cut off from who they are, the Truth within. They prevent the worst excesses of the ego and often they don't even do that. "Love and do what you will," said St. Augustine. Words cannot get much closer to the Truth than that.

Excerpted from A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose *by Eckhart Tolle. Reprinted by arrangement with Dutton, a member of Penguin Group (USA), Inc. Copyright © Eckhart Tolle, 2005.*

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both at: Qi House - 3357 (rear) W. 4th Ave
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Mirror, mirror

UNIVERSE WITHIN Gwen Randall-Young

Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves. – Carl Gustav Jung

LIFE IS LIKe a laboratory for our learning and other people are the raw materials with which we work. There are no absolutes, however, because everything is based on perception. Human perception is infinitely variable. Everyone has his or her own unique perspective that can change over the course of a lifetime or in a single moment of insight.

The problem is that the human ego believes that its perception *is* reality. Of course, this means that any other perception must be wrong. It is a little like two people having an argument; one is on the fifth floor of a high rise while the other is on the twentieth. They are arguing over their cell phones about whether the tenth floor is up or down. Each insists he is right and, according to his perspective, he is! Each uses his perspective as his basis for being right. The battle can go on endlessly unless they stop and take the time to understand the perspective of the other.

It is no wonder human communication can be difficult. Not only can we have differing perspectives about situations, but we may also project our own perceptions about a person on to that person and assume that is the reality of who they are. So I can insist that I know you better than you know yourself and that my perceptions about your intentions are more accurate than your own statements of intention. This becomes crazy making, because, as in our example above, we can argue endlessly about whose perception is correct.

What is the way out of this hall of mirrors-like maze? It is to keep our focus on ourselves and maintain the highest level of integrity we can regardless of what others are doing. Most of us have enough work to do fixing ourselves without worrying about fixing others.

One way to begin to break the habit of criticizing and judging others is to think of others as mirrors of ourselves. If we see something we do not like in another or which irritates us, consider the possibility we are being shown this behaviour because we also possess it.

In fact, in my work with couples, I very often see one partner being so upset at things the other does or says, when that individual behaves in exactly the same ways. She wants him to be sweet and romantic, but she is harsh and demeaning towards him. He does not want to be criticized by her, but he has an itemized list of everything that is wrong with her.

Think of the things that irritate you the most about someone in your life or, better still, make a list of all the things that irritate you. Then look over the list and see how many of those traits also apply to you. Get to work on changing those in yourself.

What if something really bothers you about another and you absolutely do not have that quality in yourself? In that case, the situation may be showing you your own tendency to be intolerant, judgmental and even "holier than thou."

Remember when you were in grade school and one side of the report card was for academics and the other related to personal development? One of those categories was "gets along well with others." How well do we get along with others? If we often find ourselves in conflict with others or ranting about their shortcomings, it may be time to take a look in the mirror. We might ask the image staring back at us exactly what it is that gives us the right to be so judgmental of others, exactly what that behaviour accomplishes and how exactly we would feel if others treated us this way.

Gandhi advised, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." It is quite amazing to see how when we start being how we wish others would be our world begins to change.

Think of others as mirrors of ourselves. If we see something we do not like in another or which irritates us, consider the possibility we are being shown this behaviour because we also possess it.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles, and information about her books and Self-Care CDs, visit www.gwen.ca See display ad this issue.

A walk for healing in the Tar Sands

by Rita Wong

INSPIRATION

RECENTLY, I had the honour of participating in a healing walk through the Alberta tar sands. Organized and led by indigenous people – and open to everyone – roughly 100 walkers trekked through a 13-kilometre loop that could be called the ground zero of Alberta's dirty oil industry. The healing walk started auspiciously, with a black bear walking across a path in Crane Lake Park and an eagle flying overhead.

I heard testaments of the cancers that have killed family members, caused by the tar sands. George Poitras of the Mikisew Cree reminded us that, only 40 years ago, these lands were forests that provided food for many people who hunted, fished and picked berries and now it is a toxic wasteland. Filmmaker Cleo Reese spoke movingly of the urgent need to heal the Earth. Tantoo Cardinal invoked the importance of listening, which resonated strongly with me, and of the fact that each of us represented so many more people who wanted to be there but weren't able to make it.

Healing is needed. This is indisputable. Healing of people, of communities, of land and of water, all of which are related and interdependent. Even Suncor and Syncrude, which are inflicting this horror on northern Alberta, in close collusion with the provincial and federal governments, would acknowledge that damage has been done to the land, though they would respond with greenwashing and inadequate "reclamation" projects that will take thousands of years, if ever, to evolve into the complex biodiversity and drinkable water that has already been destroyed.

The walk was a courageous affirmation of the need to respect the land and to heal the destruction of the people, animals and plants living there, and to also heal us, the witnesses and reluctant "benefactors" or implicated consumers in an oil-dependent economy. The will to heal is humble and tenacious, inviting creative responses, ideas and more actions.

It's worth considering the walk in the context of recent films that have been made such as *To the Tar Sands, H2Oil, Petropolis, Land of Oil and Water,* and books like Andrew Nikiforuk's *Tar Sands.* There is a growing awareness that the scale of devastation occurring in northern Alberta affects us all, through global warming, the violent destruction of indigenous peoples' way of life and the pollution of the water. This spreading knowledge is why the Bellingham city council voted unanimously in June to avoid fuel from the Alberta Tar Sands. I hope more cities will follow this example.

As we walked, the wind blew fiercely and constantly and the sun peeked through the clouds and smog now and then, reminding us that other forms of energy exist right there, cleaner than and equally as powerful as the dirty tar. I want a society that lives by respecting the wind, the sun, the water and the Earth.

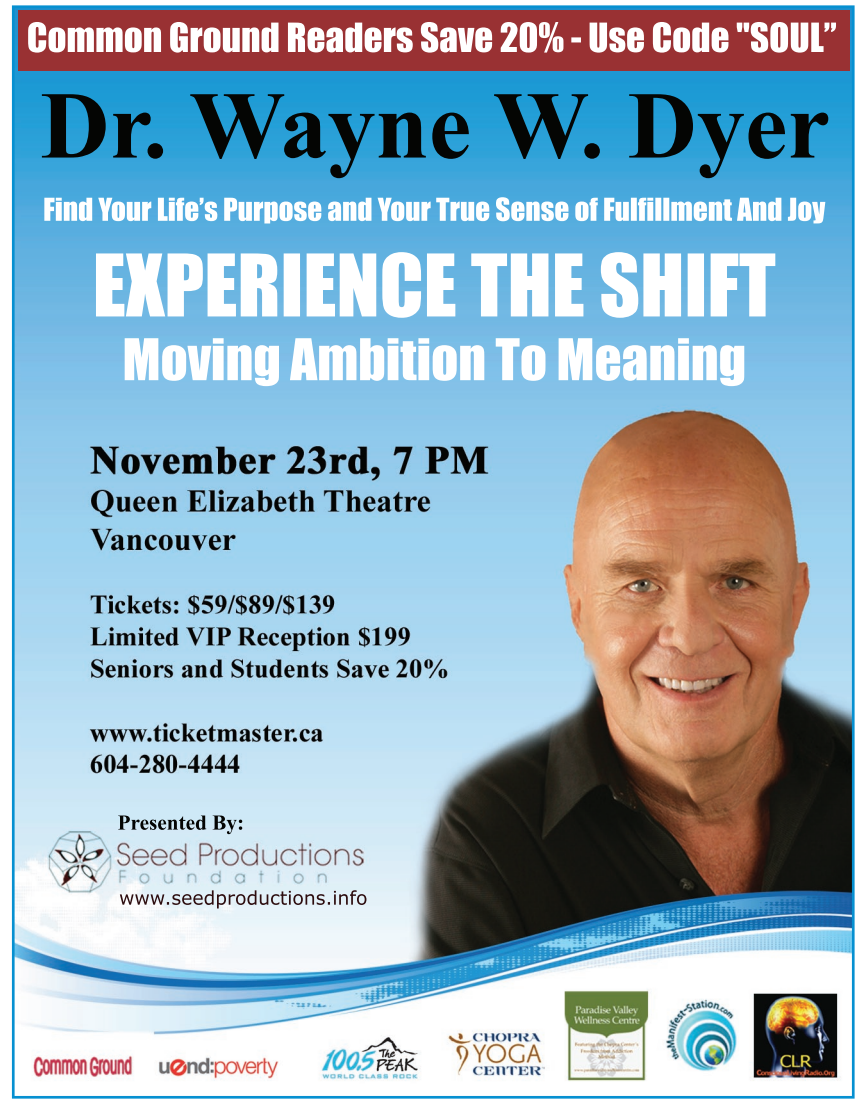
It is not lost on me that I live in the belly of the bitumen beast and that by driving and flying, I am also implicated in the very oil addiction that I am critiquing. My hands are also reluctantly dirty, black with oil and tar. But this is the first step to recovery for an addict: to acknowledge that the addiction exists. I observed various signs of addiction around Fort McMurray – evidence of alcoholism and drugs, all the crutches that people use to bear the unbearable pain.

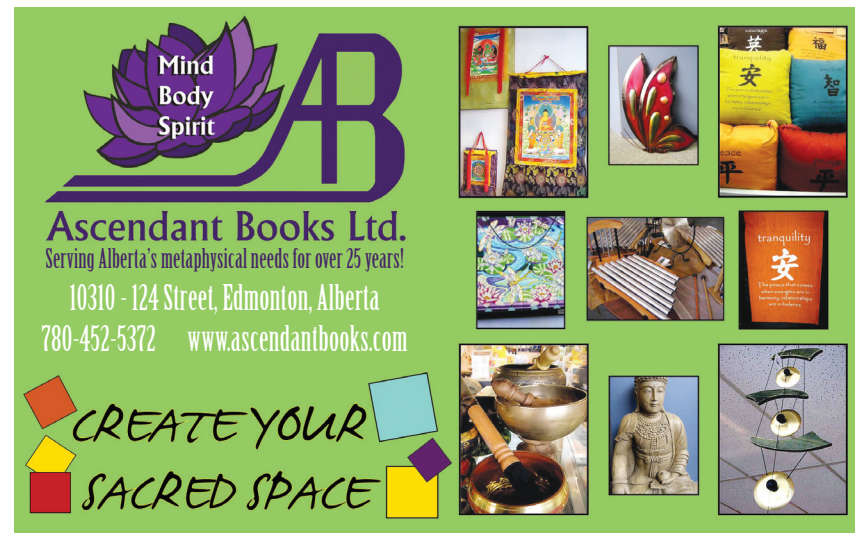
They say that people in glass houses shouldn't throw rocks, but led by the organizers of the healing walk, we were steadily chipping away at the glassy skyscraper fortresses of the petro state, refusing to accept the imperial delirium, and remembering that we are a vibrant part of the green house called Mother Earth.

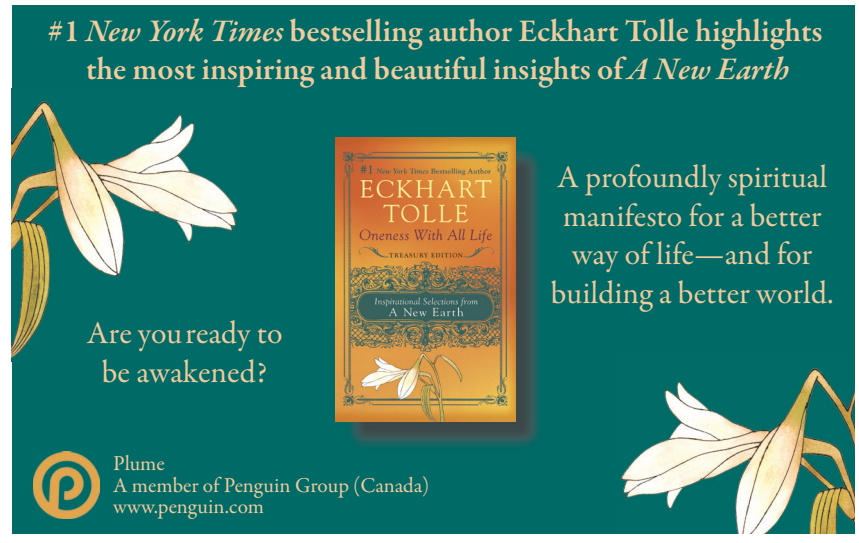
As Andrew Nikiforuk has observed, "The real work of transforming Canada's fossil fuel-dependent economy will not be big and glamorous. It will be humbling, yet rewarding." This work took a huge step forward with the healing walk on August 14 and I would like to voice my gratitude to the walk's organizers for their courage, foresight and perseverance.

This event was initiated by the "Keepers of the Athabasca," who partnered with First Nations, Metis, Inuit, environmental NGOs and Watershed citizens working to the protect the Athabasca River Watershed (www.keepersofthewater.ca/athabasca). Rita Wong is a poet and the author of Monkeypuzzle *and* Sybil Unrest. *She is currently researching the poetics of water.*

The will to heal is humble and tenacious, inviting creative responses, ideas and more actions.



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You and your

by Dr. Henry Cloud

HAVE YOU ever heard yourself say, "Whatever possessed me to say yes to this in the first place? Why didn't I just say no?" Or, after negotiating a deal, have you ever thought, "Why didn't I ask for ————? I could kick myself!" If you have, that is pretty normal or at least common. However, if it happens often, it is also a problem. It reveals that sometimes you and your words are not on the same page. You desire one outcome, but your words take you to a different one.

So we are going to look at the words that have to do with why you find yourself in certain situations more than you might think. We are going to examine your relationship to some key words, including how you feel about them and how free you are to use them, or not. Before we dive into looking at specific words and phrases, it's important to understand how certain words become embedded, or internalized, in our lives.

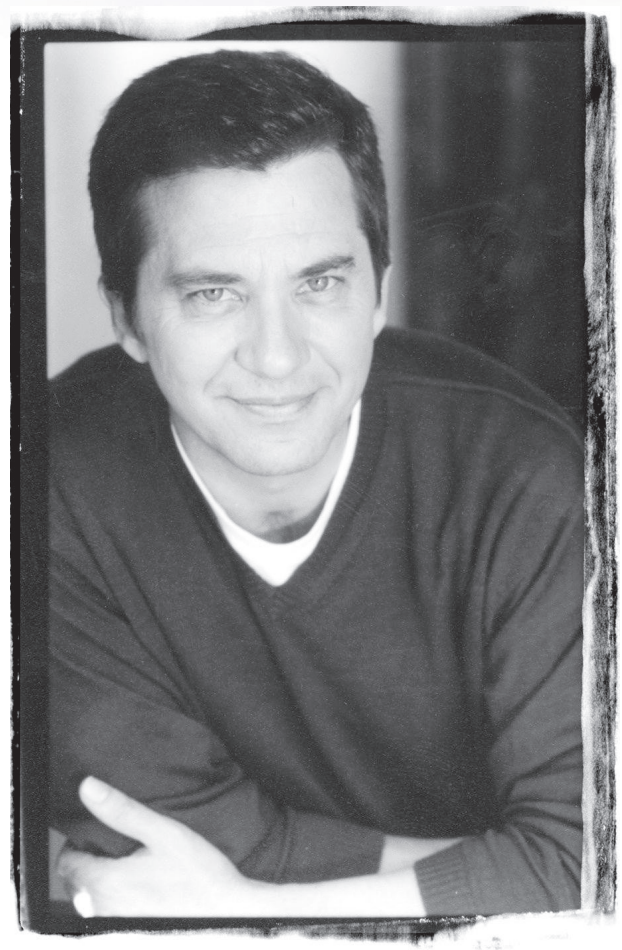
Internalizations and pattern

One would think that when you say yes or no to something, your answer is based on the merits of what you want to choose. When you want to grant a request, buy a product, agree to a price, take an assignment or go to lunch with someone, you say yes. If not, you say no. But, in reality, that is not what always happens. Sometimes, you may be on autopilot and have less choice in your response than you may think. Think about people you know or even yourself. Have you noticed that there are people who routinely find themselves in some situation they do not want to be in? Inevitably, they land in some activity, relationship, scheduling conflict or problem they did not want. The reason is not that they failed to just say no once or twice. They basically never say no. Their choices are rarely about what they want or don't want in a particular situation, but usually about their relationship with the word "no" itself. They are conflicted about the word at a very deep level. They reach down there in hopes of finding "no," but it eludes them.

Or think of the person on your team you know you cannot send out to do that negotiation. When you need someone who can go into a meeting, ask for the moon, and expect to get it, this is the last person you'd call on. They just are the kind of people who never ask for what they want. For some reason, they can't pull the trigger. As a result, they rarely get out of life what they desire, and oftentimes they don't even get what they need. They get only what comes their way and nothing more. Then you know other people who go into a meeting, ask for the moon, and get it. You exclaim, "How did you get them to agree to that?" And they answer, "I just asked for it, and they said fine."

The difference is not that one person wants or needs the outcome any more or less than the other. In fact, often the person who needs something the most is the one who finds it most difficult to ask. The real difference is that some people have a longstanding relationship with certain words that renders saying them virtually impossible. The result of not saying those words when we need to, or saying them when we don't, is that our lives become fragmented and scattered – a far cry from the integrated one life we all want. Then we are truly out of control. I know one CEO of a tech company who says "I will" almost as if it were part of his breathing. When something needs to be done, he is ever ready and just says, "Sure, I'll do that." He doesn't even think about it, until one of two things happens – either he finds himself way overcommitted and doesn't know how it happened or someone is frustrated at his lack of follow-through.

Take the words "I think," for example. I was working with a team of VPs, helping them to develop a team dynamic that was safer and more creative and risk taking. One of the VPs, Dennis, was particularly gifted, but he seemed to keep his ideas to himself in meetings, especially when Steve, the president, was in the room. I knew a lot about the deals they were working on and I was aware that there were a lot of times that Dennis knew more about them than the president. Yet he never spoke up to say what he thought.



Dr. Henry Cloud *photo by Russell Baer Photography*

I brought it up with the two of them together. I asked Dennis why there were times when he didn't say what he was thinking. I knew it was safe to do that with me in the room, as Steve had brought me in to develop that kind of team. If the president had a problem with others speaking their minds, he would be indicting himself and I wanted that to happen with me there, not some other time when he would not be forced to see that he was the problem.

When I asked Dennis why he never spoke up, he froze and instantly, without realizing it, looked at Steve. "Why are you looking at him?" I asked. "Well, uh, I don't know. I was just thinking," he said. "Let me guess," I said. "The reason you don't say what you are thinking sometimes is that you are not sure how it is going to go down with Steve if you disagree with him. Is that right?" I asked. "Well, maybe. I mean, he is the president of the company. It's his place to do what he wants," he said. I turned to the president and asked, "Steve, is that what you pay him for? To just nod at whatever you think? Or do you want to know things that you might disagree with?" "Of course I want to know," he said to Dennis. "Why do you think I brought you on? You have great experience in these areas that I know little about, and I need you to speak up. I am not going to shoot you."

From there, we got into a great discussion and found out some important things. One was that Steve really did want to know when others disagreed, but he sometimes was unaware of how the ways he pushed back were intimidating to others. Steve had to recognize that while as a leader he desired honesty from his people, some of his behaviors made it difficult for them to be honest with him – the classic "say-do" gap.

We learned something else that was huge for Dennis and for the team. He realized that his fear of speaking his mind did not begin with Steve. Dennis had grown up with a military father who did not like dissenting voices in the

house and ran the family like a combat platoon, handing out orders that were not to be questioned. Early on, Dennis learned to keep his thoughts to himself around authority figures. He developed a conflicted relationship with the words "I think." In the face of an authority figure, he kept those words to himself and just nodded. It was automatic response. He talked about this in one team meeting and it was big for him.

This is not to say that there are no situations in which it would be wise to keep one's mouth shut. In fact, that is yet another reason why this issue is so important. In contrast to Dennis, there are others who were not compliant to an authoritarian parent, and, instead, felt like they had to speak up to them no matter what the consequences. They could not keep quiet, no matter how much trouble it got them into. This is just as much an autopilot behavior as the opposite problem and both represent a loss of freedom.

If you had bad experiences when you spoke your mind, you developed a pattern of keeping silent rather than speaking up. If dissenting opinions resulted in a slap to the face or a loss of affection, you kept silent. And you still do – without thinking. It is now automatic. But, if speaking up were rewarded, then you do it well now, too. It all depends on your past experience, until you have new experiences that change the pattern.

words for herself was an entirely different matter. She was not nearly as free to say "I want" to her boss when negotiating her own contract or to her team when expressing her preferences about which part of the project she wanted to do.

When I brought up the discrepancy to her, it blindsided her.

She had grown up in a family where serving and giving were very high values, which is obviously good. It trained her to stand up for people, to ask on behalf of others and to use her power to get for others what they could not get for themselves. It had a moral high ground. But that same environment also taught her that wanting something for oneself is "selfish, prideful and self-centered." She learned early that selfishness was one of the greatest of evils. But, as it was defined for her, it included not only the "I want it all for me" kind of selfishness we all deplore, but also the idea that wanting anything for yourself is bad. So her relationship with the words "I want" was one that prompted an internal tongue lashing if she ever got close to uttering them. She felt guilty for wanting such a thing and felt she should be thinking about others and not herself. Understandably, she developed a pattern of not asking for things for herself.

The takeaway here is twofold. First, you may have a pattern with certain words that you have never noticed and that pattern is the reason you find yourself in unwanted situations. Second, that pattern was learned in experiences that have been engraved in you and have made their mark. They are now a part of the way you automatically operate. It is time to become aware of your autopilot behaviors and get your hands back on the wheel of your words and your choices. You would do well to see where you learned not to say what you want or think or will or won't do. There were probably good reasons you did that, but it is time to realize that those days are over and what might have served you well then is not helping you now.

If you had bad experiences when you spoke your mind, you developed a pattern of keeping silent rather than speaking up. If dissenting opinions resulted in a slap to the face or a loss of affection, you kept silent. And you still do...

I once worked with a leader who found himself granting more and more policy exceptions than he felt comfortable with to one of his direct reports. This employee always seemed to have special circumstances or a reason he felt he needed to be given more flexibility than company policy allowed. When I challenged the leader to look at it, he realized something. Although what he was doing did not make business sense, he was doing what he had gotten used to doing with a similar kind of person in his family – a brother who always seemed to need some kind of special treatment. Agreeing to requests for special treatment was automatic. So the thought of saying no never even occurred to him. He was just programmed that way.

Another executive I worked with had no difficulty asking for what she wanted for her company in negotiating contracts, making sales and doing their business. For her, the words "I want," when speaking on behalf of the company, came freely and easily. But trying to utter those same

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Greenwashing biotech

by Lucy Sharratt

TEN YEARS ago, Monsanto tried to convince the world – Europe, in particular –that genetically engineered (GE) crops were needed to 'feed' the hungry. At that time, the message was largely greeted with derision as a cynical ploy to sell a product that no one, including people in developing countries, wanted.

Now, the biotech industry is regrouping and re-branding itself, but the PR message looks very familiar. Food and climate change – two urgent global crises – are the context for a second major public relations push for genetic engineering. This time, however, there is an added twist: biofuels and the promise that biotechnology can fuel the world as well as feed it.

This month, the Agricultural Biotechnology Industry Conference (ABIC: September 12-15) "Bridging Biology and Business" kicks off in Saskatoon with a "Flower Power Biodiesel Workshop" aimed at the public. During this conference, we will likely see more media stories about how GE crops are needed to solve the major crises of our time. Conference sponsors include Bayer CropScience, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Genome British Columbia, Novozymes and Ag-West Bio Inc.

Believe the hype?

The biotech industry is attempting to participate in sounding the alarm over the global food crisis. One of ABIC's keynote speakers, Julian Cribb, a journalist from Australia, will present a talk entitled "The Coming Famine: risks and solutions for global food security." (This is also the name of his new book.) Cribb will stress that the urgent "global food security problem" is one of resource scarcity: we are running out of water, farmland and oil and that these and other factors, like the collapse of fisheries and changes in local climates, will all constrain our ability to meet future food needs. He is right, of course, and this is where the biotechnology industry wants to insert itself. No one disagrees that there is a world food crisis so the industry can argue this point without debate and try to take the moral high ground. Controversy arises, however, due to the corporate agenda to sell patented GE technologies as the solution, at a profit.

While industrial agriculture receives ever increasing criticism, from which it cannot defend itself, the biotech industry is strategically trying to paint its technologies as ecological and equally compatible with other smaller, less-intensive models of farming. "There is an urgent need, not only to redouble the agricultural research effort worldwide but to develop a new 'eco-agriculture' that is sustainable and less dependent on heavy use of energy, water, nutrients and other increasingly scarce industrial inputs," says Cribb.

Recently, the biotech industry tested the eco-PR waters with articles arguing that genetically engineered crops should be accepted in organic agriculture (GE is currently prohibited in organic farming), a move that stands as testimony to the growing strength of organics and

the coming showdown between organics and GE where only one will survive.

Cribb goes on to say that creating the new eco-agriculture is "humanity's most pressing scientific challenge." This characterization of the problem as a scientific one is the perfect description for the biotech industry because it invites them to put their GE crops and GE trees forward as the solution. Not surprisingly, ABIC's closing keynote address is entitled "The Global Challenges Ahead in Energy, Security and Food."

He blinded me with science

ABIC is a Canadian creation from the industry-associated Ag-West Bio Inc., which describes itself on its website as being "at the forefront of Saskatchewan's bio-economy." Ag-West members include the now defunct Canadian GM crop company Performance Plants Inc., medical giant Pfizer Canada Inc., biotech and pesticide corporation Dow AgroSciences Canada as well as government departments Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Industry Canada and the Department of international Trade. The premier of Saskatchewan is scheduled to participate in the opening ceremonies.

ABIC will offer workshops from industry, academia and government, which highlight GE and related research and inventions under the three themes "Energy & Bioproducts, Health, Sustainability." Genetic engineering is not the only technology on the table, however, as the presentation entitled "Synthetic Biology Solutions" makes clear. One of the major sponsors of ABIC 201, the company Novozymes, is experimenting with synthetic biology to create enzymes to more efficiently break down feedstocks into biofuels. The presentation "Agbiotech: The Global Sustainability Challenge" by Dr. Prem Warrior of the Gates Foundation – which is spending millions to establish what it calls a "Green Revolution for Africa," despite the protest of African farmers – is sponsored by Novozymes.

The goal of industry conferences is that of networking and selling ideas. The conferences are designed to get everyone on board with a common communications strategy and to reaffirm the industry's ideological position for corporate employees and scientists.

Saskatchewan's Ministry of Agriculture, for example, is sponsoring a presentation called "Addressing Environmental Sustainability Through Biotechnology" by Clive James of the ISAAA (International Service of the Acquisition of Agri-biotechnology Applications). Every year, ISAAA publishes global GE crop statistics in reports that should be objective, but which are actually based on industry reporting and steeped in narrative in favour of the industry.

ISAAA has recently completed "a biosafety and biotech communication skills enhancement training" for Philippine government officials in a training that was part of a series of "capacity building and technology acceptance initiatives" related to GM eggplant product development, the product that farmers and consumers in India have soundly rejected. The communication workshop module "allowed the participants to improve their skills to effectively share information, respond proactively to inquiries and anticipate public's information needs in relation to issues raised about the Bt eggplant technology."

Real solutions are in the hands of farmers

In its "Proposals for family farm-based, sustainable agriculture," La Via Campesina, the international movement of small scale farmers, states, "The major impediment to achieving sustainable ways of producing food is not the lack of appropriate technologies or the lack of knowledge of people working the land. The biggest obstacle is the way in which international and national policies, as well as the agro industry, are interfering in the food production system, forcing farmers to adopt unsustainable methods of production through a model of competition and ongoing industrialization."

Across the world, small farmers are fighting to retain their knowledge and skills for the future. Dr. Melaku Worede, world-renowned director of Ethiopia's National Gene Bank, argues, "Plant genetic resources are seldom 'raw materials.' They are the expression of the current wisdom of farmers who have played a highly significant role in the building up of the world's genetic resource base." Dr. Worede says, "Talk to the farmers. Go to their fields. Their knowledge of diversity and their selection criteria for different traits are the keys."

Regassa Feyissa, director of the Ethio-Organic Seeds Asso- *cont'd pg. 42…*

Food sovereignty is about making choices

that will keep land, resources, and food production practices in the hands of those who know their landscapes best: farmers. – Faris Ahmed, USC Canada

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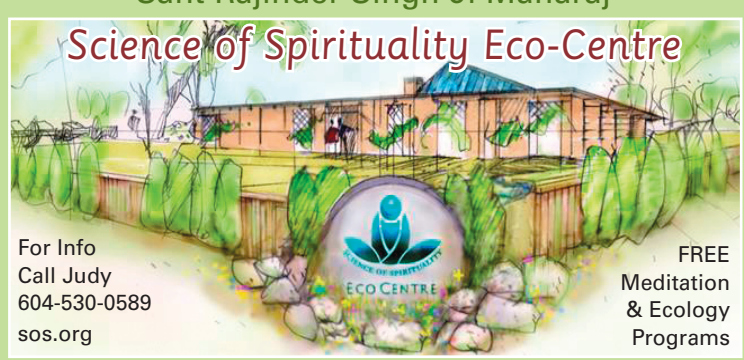

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Arctic adventure for hope

by Ezra Manson

From August 4-20, 16-year-old Ezra Manson, along with 78 other international students, participated in a an exploration of the northern reaches of Nunavik and eastern Baffin Island, with the goal of developing the knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices needed to become polar ambassadors and environmentally responsible citizens. Despite modern influences and conveniences, Inuit have retained their language, core knowledge and beliefs. Future decisions regarding Arctic sovereignty, governance and development will affect Arctic environments, societies and international relations. Youth have a key role to play in shaping the world of today and the world of tomorrow. http://www.studentsonice.com/arctic2010/index.html

SITTING IN a zodiac at the bottom of an 850-foot cliff while a cyclone of thousands of birds swooped all around brought my mind into a world of awe. Digges Island is home to 180,000 pairs of Thick-billed Murres, a seabird found exclusively in the Arctic. Garry Donaldson, a scientist who studies the birds, considers them to be the flying penguin of the north.

Through a program called Students on Ice, I spent two weeks exploring the Canadian Arctic. I am a 16-year-old from Vancouver, BC, who just graduated from the TREK Program at Prince of Wales Secondary. I was drawn to this opportunity to get a stronger grasp of climate change, learn more about my country and explore the possibilities of my future. This experience has transformed the way I will think and care about this planet for the rest of my life.

Kuujjuaq, located on the north coast of Nunavik, Quebec, was the farthest north I had ever travelled. As we drove through Kuujjuaq we passed hundreds of relatively young-looking trees. Upon our arrival at the town centre, the mayor of Kuujjuaq and a senator from Nunavik gave us a warm welcome to kick off our expedition. The mayor then talked about the blatant effects climate change has had on the region – one being that trees were an entirely new addition to the environment in Kuujjuaq; it had always been a region too far north for trees to grow. Climate change was actually capable of shifting the Earth's tree line north.

Ironically, "Auyuittuq" means "the land that never melts" in Inuktitut. Now there were only a few rapidly retreating glaciers in this previously frozen land.

Sailing through the Hudson Strait in the days to come presented me with perceptions and scenery that will forever be engraved in my memory. "In the past, we used the ice charts to avoid ice, but this year we are using them to find ice," said expedition leader, Geoff Green. And there was no ice to be found.

Despite the lack of ice, we still had the chance to see spectacular sights such as icebergs, walrus colonies, polar bears and vast landscapes, which incessantly reminded me how insignificant we really are. One night I had the pleasure of seeing a sunset stretched 180 degrees across the horizon, followed by the northern lights dancing throughout the clear night sky.

Kekerten Island was a revelation. It's an old whaling station from the 1800's that was shared cooperatively by the Americans, Scottish and Inuit. I got a very strange vibe from this place. The surroundings were silent as I softly walked through a graveyard of perished whalers and thousands of bowhead whales. It made me feel ashamed that, as humans, we had yet again been the cause of an environmental tragedy, nearly wiping out the entire species.

The highlight may have been the day we sailed to Auyuittuq National Park, located in Cumberland Sound. We hiked through a valley with massive mountains encircling us on either side. After 12 kilometres of hiking through rivers, sand, moss, mud and no ice, we finally reached the Arctic Circle. Ironically, "Auyuittuq" means "the land that never melts" in Inuktitut. Now there were only a few rapidly retreating glaciers in this previously frozen land. For this reason, I found it very disheartening to look at some of the most beautiful scenery in the world and know that its ecosystems are at risk due to our actions. With scientists all over the world saying that we are fast approaching the point of no return regarding climate change, I could not help but feel frustrated, sad and powerless.

The next morning I woke up to an announcement over the intercom, "Bowhead whales at the starboard side of the bow." Green said that he and the crew had counted over 40 bowheads in this little fjord. The simple realization that a species that was once nearly extinct now numbers in the thousands gave me assurance that humans can snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

Of the many presentations during the expedition, one by Alanna Mitchell resonated deeply within me. She described how the overload of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is causing the oceans to acidify, which is harmful to Earth's most basic, yet vital, life forms. For the Thick-billed Murres and many other arctic species, this is detrimental for their survival since they feed off of ocean life. And just as another spell of helplessness and gloom began to come over me, Alanna said with passion and concern, "You can choose hope."

Ezra Manson first became interested in environmental studies through his father Paul Manson, who taught him the importance of renewable energy and why humans must live co-dependently with the environment. Next year, Ezra will attend VanTech where he hopes to spread his knowledge to his peers and the community. Email Ezra at ezramanson@hotmail.com Learn more at www.studentsonice.com

Big Pharma "lemons" pose health risks

by Sherry Baker

FOR YEARS, natural health proponents have been sounding the alarm about the dangers of new drugs being pushed on consumers. But is that a one-sided, inaccurate view? Not at all. In fact, new research now shows the problems with Big Pharma's hugely hyped medications are far worse than most people have even dreamed. Independent reviewers found that about 85 percent of new drugs offer few, if any, new benefits, but they carry the risk of causing serious harm to users.

According to Donald Light, Ph.D., a professor of comparative health policy at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, and author of the study, the pharmaceutical industry is a "market for lemons" and Big Pharma spends a fortune to sell those lemons to the public.

"Sometimes drug companies hide or downplay information about serious side effects of new drugs and overstate the drugs' benefits," said Dr. Light. "Then they spend two to three times more on marketing than on research to persuade doctors to prescribe these new drugs. Doctors may get misleading information and then misinform patients about the risks of a new drug. It's really a two-tier market for lemons."

Dr. Light's paper, *Pharmaceuticals: A Two-Tier Market for Producing 'Lemons' and Serious Harm,* is an institutional analysis of the pharmaceutical industry and how it works. He based his conclusions on a wide range of data from independent sources and studies, including the Canadian Patented Medicine Prices Review Board, the Food and Drug Administration, and *Prescrire International* (a French language journal which publishes extensive research on pharmacology, toxicology and pharmaceutics). Much of the research for the study was conducted for a forthcoming book that Dr. Light edited. *The Risk of Prescription Drugs* is slated for publication this fall by Columbia University Press.

In both his paper and his book, Dr. Light emphasizes what he dubs the "Risk Proliferation Syndrome," which refers to the way Big Pharma has grossly maximized the number of people exposed to new drugs with relatively low effectiveness, but with a heightened risk of adverse and often severe side effects. The pharmaceutical giants have accomplished this by failing to put each new medication on the market using a controlled, limited launch, which would allow evidence to be gathered about the drug's effects, positive and negative. Instead, Big Pharma builds hugely hyped drug launches based on clinical trials that were designed in the first place to minimize evidence of harm and are published in the medical literature to only emphasize a drug's advantages.

Pharmaceutical companies spend millions of dollars on massive campaigns to sell a new prescription med, recruiting leading doctors to use the drug for conditions other than those for which it is approved, Dr. Light revealed. By promoting such off-label or unapproved uses, Big Pharma goes after even more sales and physicians inadvertently become what Dr. Light calls "double agents" – they work to push sales of the new drug while they are supposed to be stewards of their patients' well-being.

And what happens when patients complain that the drug is making them sicker and/or producing side effects? Studies show their doctors usually just discount or dismiss these complaints, Dr. Light said.

According to the new study, the big drug companies are successful in getting away with selling their "lemon" drugs because of three main reasons: Big Pharma is in charge of testing their own new drugs; the pharmaceutical companies have invested millions in building "firewalls" of legal protection to hide information about a drug's dangers or lack of effectiveness; and the bar for drug efficacy is set fairly low to make it easier for Big Pharma to get a new drug approved.

Big Pharma is in charge of testing their own new drugs; the pharmaceutical companies have invested millions in building "firewalls" of legal protection to hide information about a drug's dangers or lack of effectiveness; and the bar for drug efficacy is set fairly low to make it easier for Big Pharma to get a new drug approved.

Dr. Light pointed out that, despite the extensive requirements for testing the efficacy and safety of each new medication, drug companies use a strategy of "swamping the regulator" with large numbers of incomplete, partial and substandard clinical trials. For instance, in one study of 111 final applications for approval, 42 percent lacked adequately randomized trials, 40 percent had flawed testing of dosages, 39 percent lacked evidence of clinical efficacy and 49 percent raised concerns about serious, adverse side effects.

"The result is that drugs get approved without anyone being able to know how effective they really are or how much serious harm they will cause," he said. "The companies control the making of scientific knowledge and then control which findings will go to the FDA or be published."

As Mike Adams recently reported in NaturalNews, statin drugs are a prime example of the Big Pharma push to market drugs as safe and effective while glossing over the fact they often harm far more people than they help – in the case of statins, causing everything from liver damage, acute kidney failure and extreme muscle weakness to cataracts (http://www.naturalnews.com/028988_s...).

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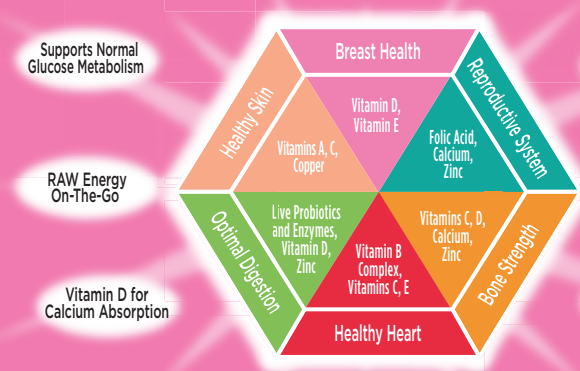

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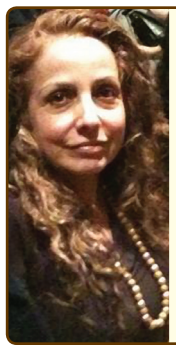

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Reactivity and grievances

A NEW EARTH Eckhart Tolle

WHEREAS resentment is often the emotion that goes with complaining, it may also be accompanied by a stronger emotion such as anger or some other form of upset. In this way, it becomes more highly charged energetically. Complaining then turns into reactivity, another of the ego's ways of strengthening itself. There are many people who are always waiting for the next thing to react against, to feel annoyed or disturbed about and it never takes long before they find it. "This is an outrage," they say. "How dare you... I resent this." They are addicted to upset and anger as others are to a drug. Through reacting against this or that, they assert and strengthen their feeling of self.

A long-standing resentment is called a grievance. To carry a grievance is to be in a permanent state of "against" and that is why grievances constitute a significant part of many people's ego. Collective grievances can survive for centuries in the psyche of a nation or tribe and fuel a never-ending cycle of violence.

A grievance is a strong negative emotion connected to an event in the sometimes-distant past that is being kept alive by compulsive thinking, by retelling the story in the head or out loud of "what someone did to me" or "what someone did to us." A grievance will also contaminate other areas of your life. For example, while you think about and feel your grievance, its negative emotional energy can distort your perception of an event that is happening in the present or influence the way in which you speak or behave toward someone in the present. One strong grievance is enough to contaminate large areas of your life and keep you in the grip of the ego.

It requires honesty to see whether you still harbour grievances, whether there is someone in your life you have not completely forgiven, an "enemy." If you do, become aware of the grievance both on the level of thought as well as emotion, that is to say, be aware of the thoughts that keep it alive and feel the emotion that is the body's response to those thoughts. Don't try to let go of the grievance. Trying to let go, to forgive, does not work. Forgiveness happens naturally when you see that it has no purpose other than to strengthen a false sense of self, to keep the ego in place. The seeing is freeing. Jesus' teaching to "Forgive your enemies" is essentially about the undoing of one of the main egoic structures in the human mind. The past has no power to stop you from being present now. Only your grievance about the past can do that. And what is a grievance? The baggage of old thought and emotion.

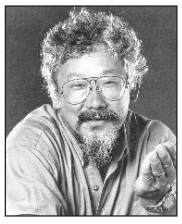
Being right, making wrong

Complaining as well as faultfinding and reactivity strengthen the ego's sense of boundary and separateness on which its survival depends. But they also strengthen the ego in another way by giving it a feeling of superiority on which it thrives. It may not be immediately apparent how complaining, say, about a traffic jam, about politicians, about the "greedy wealthy" or the "lazy unemployed" or your colleagues or ex-spouse, men or women, can give you a sense of superiority. Here is why. When you complain, by implication you are right and the person or situation you complain about or react against is wrong.

There is nothing that strengthens the ego more than being right. Being right is identification with a mental position – a perspective, an opinion, a judgment, a story. For you to be right, of course, you need someone else to be wrong and so the ego loves to make wrong in order to be right. In other words, you need to make others wrong in order to get a stronger sense of who you are. Not only a person, but also a situation can be made wrong through complaining and reactivity, which always implies that "this should not be happening." Being right places you in a position of imagined moral superiority in relation to the person or situation that is being judged and found wanting. It is that sense of superiority the ego craves and through which it enhances itself.

Facts undoubtedly exist. If you say: "Light travels faster than sound" and someone else says the opposite is the case, you are obviously right, and he is wrong. The simple observation that lightning precedes thunder could confirm this. So not only are you right, but you know you are right. Is there any ego involved in this? Possibly, but not necessarily. If you are simply stating what you know to be true, the ego is not involved at all, because there is no identification. Identification with what? With mind and a mental position. Such identification, however, can easily creep in. If you find yourself saying, "Believe me, I know" or "Why do you never believe me?" then the ego has already crept in.

Every ego confuses opinions and viewpoints with facts. Furthermore, it



More drilling, more disasters

SCIENCE MATTERS David Suzuki with Faisal Moola

THE GULF of Mexico disaster is just the latest in a long history of "accidents." As Canada considers drilling for oil in the Arctic now that ice seems to be less of an impediment, we should remember that in October 1970, a blowout at a natural gas well on King Christian Island in the Arctic Ocean created a massive flame, as up to 5.6 million cubic metres of gas a day spewed for more than three months. It was the second blowout in the Arctic since drilling began the year before. Around the same time, the drilling consortium, Panarctic Oil Ltd., was slapped with a huge fine for dumping junk steel, waste oil and other garbage into the Arctic Ocean.

The drilling companies found a novel solution to the latter problem: they convinced the federal government of the day to issue ocean dumping permits, making the practice legal and common until 1993, when the Inuit challenged one of the permits.

If we were to allow stepped-up drilling and exploration in the Arctic, or off the BC coast, we could expect more of these kinds of disasters in sensitive ecosystems. And, as I've often pointed out, what we do to the oceans, we do to ourselves. We depend on the oceans for our survival – for our food and our oxygen and for so much more.

But we can't lay all the blame on the fossil fuel companies. They're just doing their job, fuelling an ever-increasing demand. They may appear to act with the scruples of crack dealers, but we're all contributing to the global petro-economy. As demand for energy continues to grow, we can expect governments and industry to seek out fossil fuels from ever more remote, dirty and dangerous sources.

And yet how many of us are willing to make changes in our own lives to cut back on our use of fossil fuels? The Gulf of Mexico situation is horrendous, but

The industry does what it can to keep people in the dark... BP has been trying to buy scientists working on oil and marine issues in the Gulf.

Oil industry people are fond of claiming that practices and technology are improving, that we don't have to worry any more – and then, boom, we get another disaster like the one in the Gulf of Mexico or the recent Enbridge pipeline leak in Michigan. Often, the initial reaction of industry folks is to downplay the incidents. In the Arctic, a small population means that fewer people notice the disasters and pollution. It's harder to ignore in a heavily populated area like the Gulf Coast of the US and Mexico.

Still, the industry does what it can to keep people in the dark. According to Alabama's Press-Register newspaper, BP has been trying to buy scientists working on oil and marine issues in the Gulf. As the paper's Ben Raines reports, "BP PLC attempted to hire the entire marine sciences department at one Alabama university."

The newspaper obtained a copy of the contract the oil company was offering to scientists. "It prohibits the scientists from publishing their research, sharing it with other scientists or speaking about the data that they collect for at least the next three years." This would prevent these scientists from testifying in any legal action brought against BP for the catastrophe.

the amount of oil represents only about one quarter of the world's daily consumption. That means, every day, we consume four times more oil than that spilled in the Gulf, spewing the associated crap into the atmosphere, rivers, lakes and oceans.

But as I look out the window of my office, I see a steady stream of SUVs, trucks and cars – most of them with just a driver and no passengers and many of them driven for the convenience of avoiding walking or taking a bus.

We must convince governments and industry leaders to invest more in clean-energy solutions and to put certain areas off limits to oil exploration, drilling and shipping, but we also must all take personal responsibility for the fossil fuel-related disasters, from blowouts to climate change. We and our world would be healthier if we relied less on our cars and more on transit, bicycles and our feet. We can also educate ourselves about other ways to reduce fossil-fuel consumption, such as using fewer plastic bags and disposable plastic products and insulating our homes. We're all a part of the problem and of the solution.

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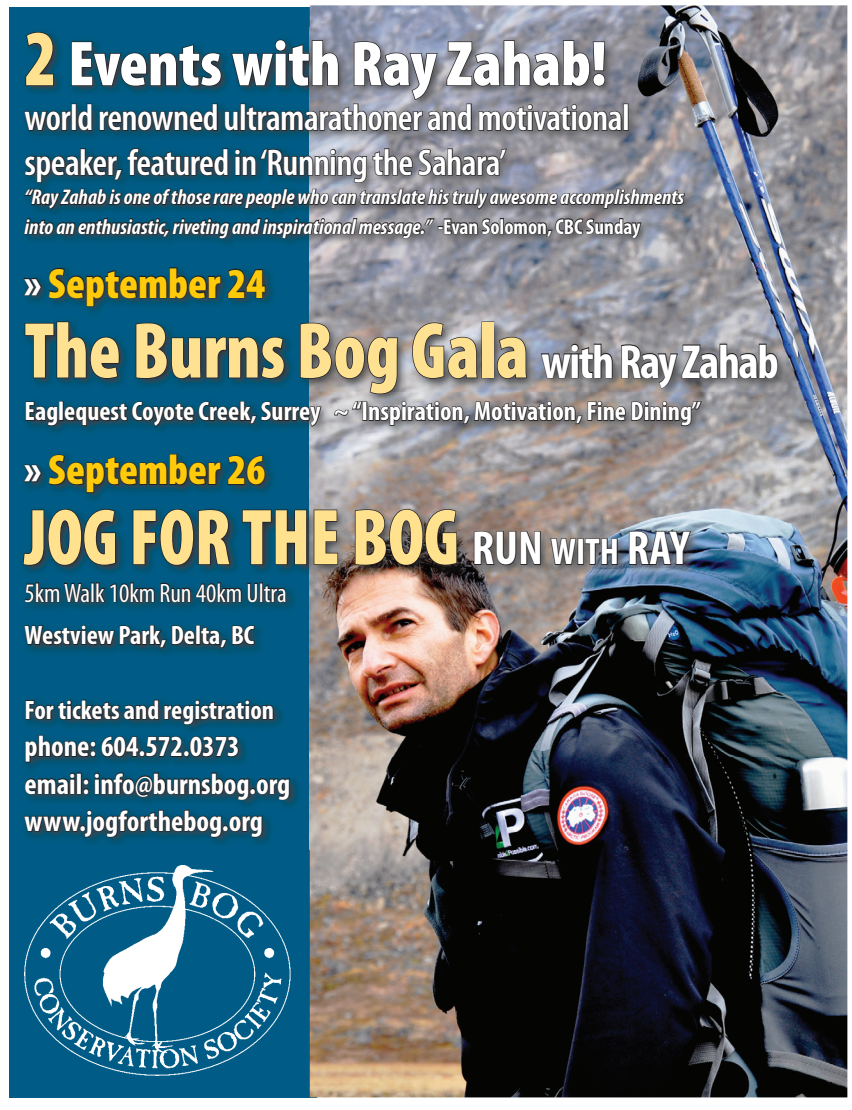
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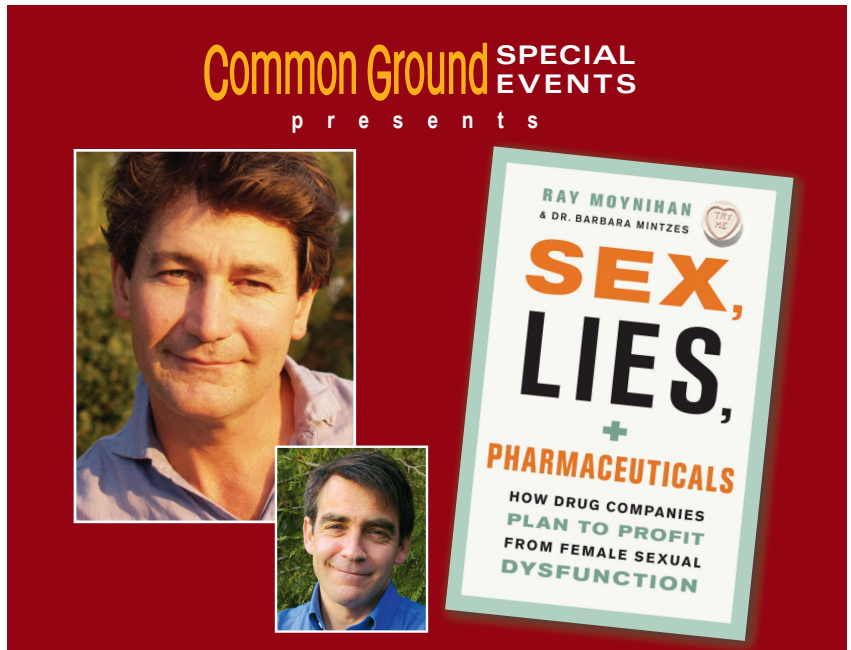
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Details TBA in our October issue.

HST or democracy?

Bill Vander Zalm announcing that there are more than enough signatures for the anti HST referendum to pass.

Vander Zalm urges Premier to hold free fall vote on HST initiative petition

Fight HST leader and former BC premier, Bill Vander Zalm, has sent a letter urging Premier Gordon Campbell to agree to accept the Initiative petition to end the HST for a vote in the legislature this fall.

Vander Zalm says the court ruling on August 20 paves the way for the legislature to vote on the draft Bill now, and the time for delays is over. "We have asked the premier to indicate to the Standing Committee that he is willing to receive the draft Bill to extinguish the HST in a fall sitting of the legislature. We have told the premier that a costly and undemocratic, non-binding "Initiative Vote" is a waste of time and money, since even if it passes, the Bill will only come right back to the legislature for a vote anyway."

Vander Zalm says the threshold for an Initiative Vote is 50 percent of all registered voters, instead of a majority of votes cast, meaning that twice as many people who voted for the BC Liberal government are required to defeat a policy implemented by that government. "That is totally undemocratic and an exercise in futility. It is contrary to Canadian democratic tradition which has always relied on a majority of votes cast, not a pre-determined number of people showing up to vote," said Vander Zalm.

"It is also a colossal waste of money. It is estimated to cost $30-$50 million to conduct such a non-binding vote. During a time of economic hardship for so many, and massive deficits by the government, that is money that could be better spent on health care or education or other services."

Vander Zalm says he has told the premier that if a vote is not conducted this fall, it will be seen by British Columbians as just another delaying tactic by the government. "We won't let them derail this process again. Their big business partners tried it last week in the courts and failed. The judge was very clear – this is a matter for the legislature. Failure to deal with it fairly and expeditiously will result in Recall campaigns against BC Liberal MLAs starting in November."

Vander Zalm says that the only acceptable vote in the legislature is one that will defeat the tax and obey the will of an overwhelming majority of British Columbians as evidenced in the dozens of opinion polls taken on the matter, as well as the hugely successful Initiative petition.

"The people have spoken. The Supreme Court has spoken. It is time now for the government to get rid of the HST or bear the consequences of an outraged public," Vander Zalm concluded.

HST Extinguishment Act a valid matter for Province to deal with

BC Supreme Court Chief Justice, Robert Bauman, ruled on August 20 that the Initiative petition to end the HST in British Columbia is a valid matter for the legislature and gave the go ahead to the Chief Electoral Officer to hand over the petition and draft Bill, "The HST Extinguishment Act," to the legislative Standing Committee.

Initiative proponent, Fight HST leader and former Premier, Bill Vander Zalm, said lawyers for the business lobby tried to argue that the HST Extinguishment Act was beyond provincial authority. "They said the HST was an exclusively federal tax that could not be extinguished by the BC government once implemented. Justice Bauman's decision has essentially nullified that argument by allowing the legislature to 'undo' the HST by whatever means is necessary."

Vander Zalm explained, "The HST Extinguishment Act's purpose is to get rid of the HST by terminating the CITC Agreement that gave rise to it. We have said all along that may involve negotiations or discussions with the federal government to give effect to our intentions. Now all of that can happen."

"This decision allows for the provincial legislature to deal with the matter irrespective of whether the HST is considered a federal tax or not. We now have the means to undo the severe damage caused by both the HST, and the premier and finance minister's unilateral actions to give away BC's sovereign authority over provincial sales taxes. This is huge."

Vander Zalm says the BC government can now formally request the federal government to agree to remove BC from the "harmonization" scheme in the Excise Tax Act while at the same time passing the HST Extinguishment Act, freeing BC from the HST and restoring BC's sovereignty over provincial sales taxes.

Vander Zalm says the judge rejected all of the business lobby's arguments, essentially confirming Fight HST's suspicions that the lawsuit brought by big business was in essence a nuisance action that had little legitimacy or foundation in the first place.

"The magnitude of today's decision cannot be overstated. The business lobby, as we said before, was running blocker for the government. They filed their suit a day before we submitted the petition. It was a 100 percent political challenge, and not one shred legal. They and their clients should be ashamed today for their attempts to thwart the democratic will of the people in exchange for money. It was pathetic."

Vander Zalm says his timetable for repealing the HST has not changed, and that the government has until November 15 to get rid of the hated tax or he will begin Recalls.

"The people of BC have spoken. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court has spoken. There is no more room for delays, political tactics or legal games anymore. It's time now for MLAs to stand up for their constituents, and end the HST in BC by voting to get rid of it in a fall sitting of the legislature," Vander Zalm concluded.

The time for delays is over. The government must act now to ensure the democratic will of the people is respected. – Bill Vander Zalm

Help support the legal battle and make a donation. Make cheques payable to HST Legal Challenge and mail to 370 East Broadway, PO Box 95023, Vancouver, BC, V5T 4T8. Donations can also be made online at http://fighthst.com/donation/ and/or sign up to register with Fight HST for BC Recall at www.fightHST.com

…Two wrongs *from p. 4*

mention they were bringing in the new harmonizing sales tax to cover up part of their losses. So Mr. Harper found a financially desperate premier to play the "Hide and Seek Tax" (HST) game: hide your debt and seek more taxes. The $1.6 billion for transfer funding did the trick.

Grabbing the $1.6 billion and applying it to the provincial debt looked good, or at least better, on the books. But readers, that $1.6 billion from the feds is still your tax money; it's not free money. It comes from your income taxes and GST. It's a tax shell game. And the provincial government didn't just stop at raising taxes for its massive financial screw-up; it has raised fees on whatever it can, including insurance, licensing, ferries, premiums and camping.

No party can take credit for the natural beauty of BC; it's the nature of the place. Using this naturally endowed beauty as a cover-up for massive financial screw-ups is devious – all wrapped up in their mantra "The Best Place on Earth." Too bad we don't have a comparable "Best Democracy" or "Best Government on Earth." More than 700,000 voters in BC have signed the anti-HST petition and they want better governance. Voters do not like taxation without representation, as was the case when BC's HST was rammed through by an order in counsel rather than being fully debated in the legislature. Voters want democracy. They are standing their ground through the process of referendum, and if that does not provide relief, then through recall of MLAs.

Two wrongs don't make a right but it does make for strange bedfellows. The provincial Liberal/Conservatives and the federal Conservative/Liberals have taken each other as dancing partners to distract the voters from seeing their fiscally lame screw-ups. Simply put, the feds are in debt so they take our tax money and give it to the province. Likewise, the province is in debt so it takes our provincial tax money and gives it to the feds.

This dance of debt continues until the music stops. Both partners are extremely invested in keeping the music going.

It is not this writer's intention to have Tweedledee or Tweedledum run our governments, but whichever parties are elected, the citizens of our land should be treated with honesty, fairness and provided full disclosure. This is currently not the case and it is up to the citizens to make it so.

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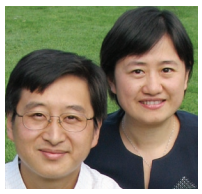

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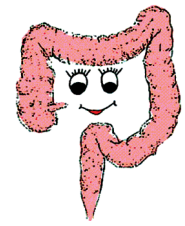

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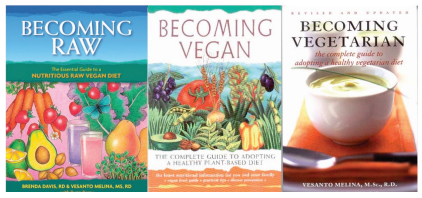

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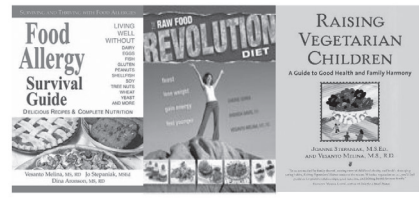

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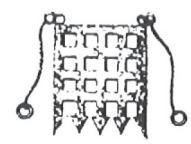

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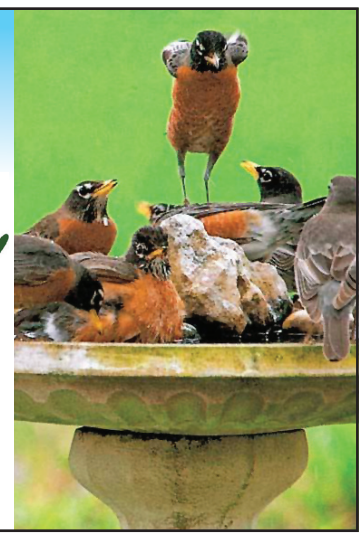

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The 4th Revolution—Energy Autonomy (Germany/USA, 87 min.)
Possibly the most inspirational, solutions-based environmental film out there, Carl-A Fechner's impressively mounted documentary travels the world to examine best practices—in Denmark, Germany, Brazil, Bangladesh and Mali—that put much of the rest of the world to shame. Very slick. Very encouraging. **<4THRE>**

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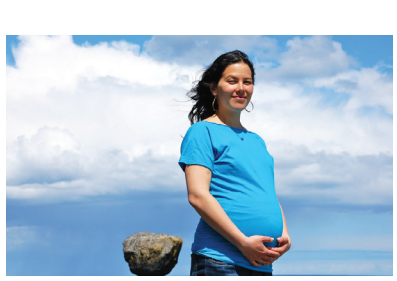

Severn, The Voice of Our Children (France, 120 min.)
A remarkable documentary dealing with the environmental problems facing our planet, Jean-Paul Jaud's ravishingly visual work uses 12-year-old Severn Suzuki's (daughter of David, who is the subject of *Force of Nature*, also at VIFF) 1992 address to the Earth Summit in Rio as the jumping off point for a globe-trotting examination of how individuals are combatting threats to our world. **<SEVER>**

Back to the Garden, Flower Power Comes Full Circle (USA, 70 min.)
In Washington State's Okanogan in 1988, Kevin Tomlinson filmed a group of "hippies" who had been living off the land since the 60s. Now in this poignant examination of this community over time, he tracks down those original interviewees and shows what the glories and sufferings of living off the grid might really entail. **<BACKT>**

Himalaya, A Path to the Sky (France, 65 min.)
Perched almost at the very roof the world is the Buddhist monastery of Pukthal, India. Many of the monks who live, work and pray there are little more than children. Director Marianne Chaud details the joy and struggle of life high in the Himalayan peaks with rare intimacy and candour. **<HIMAL>**

An Ecology of Mind (Canada/USA, 116 min.)
Nora Bateson celebrates her anthropologist-father Gregory Bateson, whose work in cybernetics, semiotics and epistemology continues to challenge us to see our lives within a larger system. With ***A Simple Rhythm*** (Canada, 56 min.), Tess Girard's absorbing look at (and listen to) synchrony and chaos, and the universal vibrations that connect us all. **<ECOLO>**

An indecent proposal

INDEPENDENT MEDIA Steve Anderson

ON AUGUST 9, I woke up to headlines like "Google Goes Evil" and "Google Greed and the End of Net Neutrality." As someone who has worked alongside Google to keep the internet open (AKA Net Neutrality) in Canada, I was stunned. Did the open internet community just lose its biggest industry supporter?

The headlines stemmed from a controversial "joint policy proposal" that Google and Verizon had just submitted to US policymakers. The industry heavyweights hoped the proposal would be adopted as a framework for the future regulation of internet service.

Despite the headlines, the proposal does present some important provisions, such as non-discrimination and non-prioritization of online content and services, which will help ensure an open internet in the US. However, it also omits the ever-important mobile access to the internet, through smart phones and other devices, from oversight in the US. Increasingly, consumers will use wireless broadband as their preferred medium for internet access.

Also problematic, the proposal goes on to suggest that ISPs should be allowed to offer "differentiated services." Such services "could make use of or access internet content, applications or services and could include traffic prioritization." Allowing ISPs to offer such services creates an incentive to use their bandwidth to provide access to these services through cable television, which reaches citizens' homes through the same infrastructure as the internet.

The result would be bandwidth scarcity for the open public internet and disproportionate investment in ISP-controlled private internet services. Allowing such services provides a backdoor for ISPs to use to sneak around open internet rules.

Closed government the real villain

US public interest groups like Free Press are up in arms over the proposal and the FCC has also expressed concerns with it. While most of the outrage from consumer groups has targeted Google, the real culprit is the FCC's closed-door approach to rule making.

The proposal comes just days after the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced it was abandoning its own efforts to develop a plan through negotiations with leading phone, cable and internet companies. The proposal and accompanying public outcry are the result of limiting public input and longstanding policy neglect concerning internet openness in the US.

Canada's media regulator, the CRTC, took an important step in the right direction last October by putting forward open internet ("traffic management") guidelines. On June 30, the CRTC extended its Traffic Management rules to mobile wireless data services.

Although these are clear signs of positive momentum for ensuring internet openness in Canada, as it stands right now, ISPs have not yet been told to stop throttling access to the open internet. Furthermore, under the current CRTC guidelines, the onus falls on the consumer to file a complaint and prove that an ISP is unjustly throttling traffic.

While Canada is clearly ahead of the US in that we have some net neutrality guidelines for both wired and wireless devices, we still do not have net neutrality in actual practice. It is thus still unclear how or if Net Neutrality will be enforced in Canada.

Eerily similar to the FCC's industry meetings, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Industry Minister Tony Clement have also reportedly had closed-door meetings with representatives from the Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC). ITAC is Canada's most powerful lobby group for the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector.

If the government continues to develop public policy through closed-door meetings while Canadian individuals and organizations lack clear internet openness enforcement rules, we're open to the same sort of industry policy development shenanigans that we see playing out in the US.

Online democracy and offline democracy are inextricably linked; neglect of either is neglect of both. The Google/Verizon proposal isn't indecent as much as it's imperfect, much like any public policy developed without a democratic process.

I encourage Canadians to stand up for online democracy by sending a message to Tony Clement at: http://SaveOurNet.ca

Steve Anderson is the national coordinator for OpenMedia.ca He has written for The Tyee, Toronto Star, Epoch Times *and* Adbusters.
steve@openmedia.ca,
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VIFF's eco docs

FILMS WORTH WATCHING
Robert Alstead

CULTURE

Inspiring *4th Revolution* bats renewable energy nay-sayers out of the stadium.

IT SEEMS more like a decade than a year since VIFF last came round. Make that two decades. With Copenhagen's failure fast becoming a dot in the rear view mirror, one filmmaker has returned to footage from the first "Earth Summit" in Rio for inspiration. In *Severn, The Voice of Our Children*, Jean-Paul Jaud frames his thoughts for the future of the human race around the resonant words of David Suzuki's daughter in 1992, when, at 12 years of age, she told delegates at the Rio Earth summit, "What you do makes me cry at night." Now 29, and living in Haida Gwaii, Severn is still crying, but the mother-to-be is not totally without hope. Jaud balances a teary-eyed and elegiac tone with some encouraging portraits of organic pioneers around the world. I particularly liked the detailed portrait of Takao Furuno, a sage Japanese rice farmer who has used fish and ducks to fertilize rice fields and control pests, with a 30 percent increase in crop yield over industrial farming methods.

VIFF's green film strand, "Ecologies of the Mind, is particularly at pains this year to find a life-affirming green thread. In this sense, German doc *The 4th Revolution – Energy Autonomy* hits the spot and with its scattergun approach, everything around the spot. The forceful German politician Hermann Scheer spearheads the assault on the energy *status quo*, which, we are told, is perpetuated for political, not technological, reasons. Meanwhile, director Carl-A. Fechner introduces us to change-makers such as electric sports car pioneer Elon Musk, and Preben Maegaard, who talks about a Danish micro-energy success story. Together, these experts bat alternative energy naysayers – epitomized by a hapless International Energy Association (IEA) economist – out of the stadium. The ideas raised in this slick production could easily fill a whole television series.

Robinson in Ruins, set in the South of England, is a strange but curious piece of art. The premise is that 19 film cans were discovered in a derelict caravan in a field. The footage has been assembled with a dry, factual narrative based on the writings the itinerant Robinson made in his notebook. We are told Robinson believed that "if he looked at the landscape hard enough, it would reveal to him the molecular basis of historical events and in this way he hoped to see into the future..."

Point of view doc *David Wants to Fly* constantly surprised me. I almost wrote it off as navel-gazing by Berlin-based student director David Sieveking, as he raked around for inspiration. "I wanted to make dark films like my idol David Lynch," he says near the start. "But I was lacking the darkness." Lynch, a devotee of the late Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, initially gives the younger man supportive advice, but also inadvertently opens a door into the darkness surrounding this mysterious cult, popularized by the Beatles. Sieveking, to his credit, keeps matters low key and personal and shows great tenacity in the pursuit of the truth. It's an expose, but it also contains much sweetness and light.

Psychohydrography shows the passage of water from mountain to sea in time-lapse. Big subject, especially for water-deprived Los Angeles. But I felt this was too stylistically rigid and would have been more expansive using other cinematic techniques. *In The Wake of the Flood* might interest fans of Margaret Atwood, although I found it a little too rudderless.

Finally, I've only seen the teaser clips on the NFB website, but Sturla Gunnarsson's biography *Force of Nature: The David Suzuki Movie* looks a likely contender for "best documentary."

Robert Alstead made the Vancouver documentary You Never Bike Alone. *He writes at www.2020Vancouver.com*

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Bill McKibben and the 350.org team

It's been a tough year: in North America, oil gushing into the Gulf of Mexico; in Asia, some of the highest temperatures ever recorded; in the Arctic, the fastest melting of sea ice ever seen; in Latin America, record rainfalls washing away whole mountainsides. So we're having a party.

Circle 10/10/10 on your calendar. That's the date. The place is wherever you live. And the point is to do something that will help deal with global warming in your city or community. We're calling it a Global Work Party, with emphasis on both 'work' and 'party.' In Auckland, New Zealand, they're having a giant bike fix-up day, to get every bicycle in the city back on the road. In the Maldives, they're putting up solar panels on the president's office. In Kampala, Uganda, they're going to plant thousands of trees and in Bolivia they're installing solar stoves for a massive carbon neutral picnic.

You can sign up to host a local event at www.350.org/oct10 or search for an event to join at www.350.org/map.

Since we've already worked hard to call, email, petition and protest to get politicians to move, and they haven't moved fast enough, now it's time to show that we really do have the tools we need to get serious about the climate crisis.

On 10/10/10 we'll show that we the people can do this, but we need bold energy policies from our political leaders to do it on a scale that truly matters. The goal of the day is not to solve the climate crisis one project at a time, but to send a pointed political message: if we can get to work, you can get to work too – on the legislation and the treaties that will make all our work easier in the long run.

You can sign up to host a local event at www.350.org/oct10 or search for an event to join at www.350.org/map. And don't worry about being alone at this party; there are already 1,077 groups in 109 countries around the world scheduled to do something great that day. We'll knit all these groups together with a powerful mosaic of photos, videos and stories from around the world. You wouldn't want to miss it.

It's been a tough year, but it can be a beautiful day on October 10 if we work together and party together. And if we do it right, we'll take a big step towards the kind of political solutions we desperately need. Onwards!

photo by Ian McAllister

Photos like these will soon be part of a travelling exhibition in North America and Europe.

Proposed oil pipeline motivates Conservation Photographers

A selection of the world's most celebrated and talented nature photographers will deploy to BC's Great Bear Rainforest. Home to white spirit bears, ancient forests and stunning marine biodiversity, it is one of the planet's most priceless treasures. Asian oil interests wanting access to western Canada's tar sands, the second largest known oil reserves in the world, have prompted the International League of Conservation Photographers to focus on this region. Enbridge, Inc., the world's largest pipeline construction company recently filed an application to the Canadian National Energy Board to build a 1,200-kilometre twin pipeline between Alberta's tar sands and BC's north Pacific coast. The unprecedented proposal, facilitating Asian access to Canadian oil, would be constructed over a thousand streams and rivers, while introducing super oil tankers to the pristine waters of the globally recognized Great Bear Rainforest. The indigenous First Nations who call this area home unanimously oppose this project.

Documentation by ILCP will showcase the immense ecological importance of western Canada's threatened rainforest and marine environment. The images and stories from the expedition members will be shared with international media and partner organizations and will be featured in a travelling exhibition across North America and Europe. The ILCP will hold a press conference in Vancouver on September 14. (At press time, the location for the press conference has not been established.)

Home to white spirit bears, ancient forests and stunning marine biodiversity, BC's Great Bear Rainforest is one of the planet's priceless treasures.

The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup

With over 650 cleanup sites registered across Canada, it isn't too late to register for the 17th annual Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup as a site coordinator or cleanup participant. Most shoreline litter originates from land and land-based activities so by stepping up and signing up, we are all taking action to stop one of the most widespread pollution problems endangering our oceans and waterways. Plus, what crazy item do you think you'll find along your shoreline?

The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup is a Vancouver Aquarium conservation in action program that began in 1994 with a handful of Vancouver Aquarium employees who wanted to participate in the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup.

In 2009, nearly 57,000 Canadians registered to clean-up 1,568 sites across Canada. Over 160,900 kg of litter was removed from a cumulative distance of 2,500 km of shoreline, approximately equivalent to the driving distance from Vancouver to the Manitoba/Ontario border.

Some of the more unusual items found in the past include a message in a bottle (the message: "Please don't litter"), false teeth, a living room set, a canoe made out of duct tape, a wedding dress, a disco ball, a safe from an hotel, a toboggan, a mini trampoline and a clothesline complete with poles and pins.

This year's Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup takes place September 18-26. For more information or to register, please visit shorelinecleanup.ca For more information on the program, check out shorelinecleanup.ca or call 1-877-427-2422.

Take a pass on Chilean sea bass

In Canada, Chilean sea bass became the poster child for seafood unsustainability following a campaign led by the US National Environment Trust asking consumers and chefs to "Take a pass on Chilean sea bass." More recently and under pressure from consumers and environmental organizations including Greenpeace, three major Canadian supermarkets (Overwaitea, Safeway and Loblaw) stopped selling it, with Metro planning to follow suit in September, leaving only Sobeys still carrying it. But it can still be found in high-end restaurants and fish shops.

Canada is currently one of nine leading toothfish importers. How about we become instead a leading toothfish conserver?

Greenpeace has released the report Defending the Last Ocean: How Seafood Markets Can Help Save Antarctica's Ross Sea. *Read it and be sure to keep passing up the Chilean sea bass.*

Stunning stone sculptures from Zimbabwe return to VanDusen Garden

VanDusen's September offerings

Zimsculpt returns to VanDusen Garden for a second year bringing stunning stone sculptures from Zimbabwe. More than 200 pieces are artistically displayed throughout the Garden. Two artists from Zimbabwe, Passmore Mupindiko and Patrick Sephani, are in attendance throughout the exhibition and carving on site daily. All pieces are for sale with partial proceeds going to support the VanDusen Botanical Garden Association.

September 9

Cedar Series Lecture, "GMO and Terminator Seeds, The Old and New" with April Reeves in Floral Hall, 7:30 pm. April Reeves will be discussing the history and technology of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) with a focus on terminator seeds. As we address the question, "Why should we be aware of terminator technology?" Ms. Reeves will also explore the long-term vision and dangers of this technology and what you can do about GE Terminator crops and trees. Bring your questions for answers about all types of GM technology. Tickets in advance from the Administration Office or, subject to availability, at the door on the night of the lecture. Individual tickets: Members $10, non-members $15. Trio Pack includes three tickets that can be used on any three lectures in 2010. Members: $25 for 3; non-members: $40 for 3.

September 11

Bird Walk, 10 am. Meet at the Garden entrance. Join Jeremy Gordon from Nature Vancouver for a guided birding exploration in the Garden. Rain or shine. Limited to the first 20 people. Free for members or included with Garden admission. For more information on Nature Vancouver, visit www.naturevancouver.ca

September 18

Volunteer orientation, 10am-3pm. Orientation is a prerequisite for volunteer activities at VanDusen Garden. Bring your lunch; refreshments will be provided. Dress for the weather. Meet at the Totem Poles near the Garden Entrance at 10am. Learn about the many volunteer opportunities at VanDusen. Meet representatives from the VBGA staff and Board. Tour the Garden with experienced guides who will share their knowledge and enthusiasm. To register or for more information, call Judy Aird, 604-257-8674 or email volunteer@vandusen.org

September 19

Medicine Wheel Ceremony, 12-3pm at the First Nations' Medicine Wheel in the Canadian Heritage Garden. Join elders from the First Nations community in a spiritual ceremony to mark the changing of the season. Wear clothing appropriate for the weather and bring a small stone to bless and leave at the wheel as well as a food item to share at the potluck meal at the conclusion of the ceremony. For information, contact VanDusen's librarian Marina Princz at library@vandusen.org or call 604-257-8668.

September 19

HSBC VanDusen Family Program – Super Seeds for families with children ages 5 to 11 years. Seeds come in different sizes, shapes and colors. Some can be eaten and some can't. Discover the ingenious ways that seeds travel, what they are composed of and how they grow. Two sessions: 10:30am-12pm or 1:30-3 pm. Member family $15; non-member family $25 (includes admission to the Garden). One-time bursaries are available for families with limited resources. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration required. Call 604-718-5898 or email familyprograms@vandusen.org

September 25

VanDusen's Annual Compost and Spring Bulb Sale in the parking lot, 10am-3pm. $5 for a 20kg bag of compost. While picking up your compost, why not add a few bulbs to your purchase? Wide selection available.

September 25-26

Dried Flower Sale in Entrance Pavilion, 10am-4pm. Sale of dried flower centrepieces for Thanksgiving and autumn wreaths of vibrant fall colors made from materials gathered in the Garden.

VanDusen Garden is located at 5251 Oak Street in Vancouver. www.vandusen-garden.org

News from Burns Bog

September is all about Ray Zahab, fresh off the heels of his Siberian and Tunisia expeditions. He's sure to have tons of exciting and inspiring stories to tell us. Start making plans to order your tickets and register for the run today. Both events are sure to sell out so don't delay.

September 24

Ray speaks at the Burns Bog Gala, Eaglequest Coyote Creek Golf Course. $75/person; $750/table of 10; $1,000/table sponsorship. A silent auction, raffle tickets and 50/50 draw are all part of the evening's fun. Auction items include an original painting by Delta Artist of the Year Linda Jones, a print from acclaimed Canadian photographer Graham Osborne and a Nintendo Wii. Register at www.burnsbog.org/gala

September 26

Ray leads the Jog for the Bog. Walk, jog or run with Ray. Spots are filling up quickly. Register online at www.burnsbog.com or call 604-572-0373.

The Burns Bog Conservation Society is getting ready to launch a new website and we want to hear from you. Tell us what you like, dislike or anything new you would like to see. The new site includes a better resource library, a kid's corner, interactive quizzes, improved maps and directions as well as video footage of trails inside the Delta Nature Reserve. Let us know what you want to see and keep your eyes peeled for the new www.burnsbog.org coming soon.

Ray Zahab with The Hour host George Stroumboulopoulos

4 easy ways to go green & save money

from mygreenwallet.com

1. Build a clothesline.

Besides the obvious costs of electricity, a tumble dryer wears out clothes more quickly.

2. Skip the bottled water

Buy a reusable container. Fill it with tap water, a great choice for the environment, your wallet and your health. The EPA and other international governments' standards for tap water are always stricter than the FDA's standards for bottled water. Hard to believe, but water is more expensive that gasoline when you buy it by the litre.

3. Go digital

Saving energy means saving money by adjusting your thermostat a little cooler in the winter and a little warmer in the summer. Install a digital thermostat with timers. Drop the temperature of your house a few degrees while nobody is home then bring it back up right before everyone gets back.

4. Tofu Tuesdays

Going vegetarian once a week saves money and the planet. Staples such as rice, corn and beans can make trips to a grocery store less expensive. The biggest savings come in health-care costs years later as eating less meat lowers your risk of heart disease, cancer and dementia. It's better for the planet, reduces water usage and global-warming gases.

Datebook

SEPT 4-5
Live at Squamish music event Labour Day weekend: Great music! www.liveatsquamish.com

SEPT 5
Lion's Den Café 11th Anniversary Jerk Fest, 12-7pm. Live entertainment, great food & beverages. 651 East 15th (Kingsway/Fraser). 604-873-4555

SEPT 10
Indian Head Massage Weekend Course commences 7pm. Course Fee: $350 + HST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

SEPT 11
Lighthouse Spiritual Centre: Community Day 10-6 Psychic Fair, 11-4, $20/15min. reading. Danish Community Centre, 17672-57th Avenue, Cloverdale. BBQ, Silent Auction 604-539-0770, www.lighthousespiritualcentre.ca

SEPT 15
Common Ground Special Events: Geoff Olson Live! "LightTime: A Natural History of Illumination." Using cartoons and graphics, artist and writer Geoff Olson examines how science and spirituality may find common ground through one seemingly simple, yet greatly puzzling phenomenon: light. Vancouver Public Library, Lower Level, Alma Van Dusen Room & Peter Kaye Room, 7:30pm. Tix $12/adv., $15/door. Call Common Ground: 604-733-2215.

SEPT 15
HEALTH -Through Higher Spiritual Learning. In this world of riots, strikes and bad news that constantly assaults our five senses - There is Hope! Wednesday September 15, 7:30 Barclay Manor, 1447 Barclay, Vancouver.

SEPT 17
Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7.30 pm $10; Course $350. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818 www.pacificreflexology.com

SEPT 17-18
Vancouver Satsang Retreat with Greg Marian. Awaken to and embody the timeless Truth of who we really are. Satsang inquiry, guided meditations, dialogue, silence. www.MeetingsInBeing.org

SEPT 17-19
"The Power of Self-Inquiry" retreat with leading satsang teacher Mooji live on skype and on DVD; www.swanwickcentre.ca / 250-744-3354 (Victoria).

SEPT 17, 18, 19, 20
Doug Duncan Sensei: 4 public talks by Canadian-born meditation master. 7:30pm, Sacred Space Studio, $20 per talk: www.muditabc.org, 778-888-5540.

SEPT 18
Wolfsong Chanting Circle - Autumn Equinox Celebration: Saturday, September 18, 7-10pm. Participate singing sacred healing chants from the Spirit of the Land. At Vancouver Multi-Cultural Society, 1254 W. 7th. By donation. Earthsong Healing Circles. 604.418.9636. www.shamanichealing.info

SEPT 18-19
Rosen Method Weekend - Journey of Self Discovery: Special opportunity to experience Transformative Bodywork with Mariette Berinstein, Certified Teacher. $318 includes lunches. Lodging available: $37/night Cascadia Centre, Roberts Creek BC. Info/register: www.RosenMethod-Canada.com, 1-877-885-0179.

SEPT 23
Meditation for Planetary Peace on the Full Moon, Thursday, September 23rd at 7:30 PM. 2950 Laurel St, Vancouver. www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver.htm

SEPT 23 & 25
Language of Divine Communication: Teachings from the animals & ACIM with Shiri Joshua, M.A. Talk $20 workshop $120. ashley@consciouslivingradio.org Tel. 604-644-4447, www.SoulAcademy.ca

SEPT 24
Burns Bog Gala with motivational speaker Ray Zahab. An evening to recognize environmental greatness with local cuisine, awards ceremony, auction and entertainment. Tickets at www.burnsbog.org or call 604-572-0373.

SEPT 24-26
"Truth is a Pathless Land " retreat/study of J.Krishnamurti's teaching with Mark Lee, KFA director; www.swanwickcentre.ca / 250-744-3354 (Victoria).

SEPT 26
Run with Ray at Jog for the Bog: 5km, 10km or 40km run with ultramarathoner Ray Zahab. Online registation at www.burnsbog.org or call 604-572-0373.

SEPT 30-OCT 3
Yoga Conference and Show: 4 days, 30+ master teachers, 108 classes. Vancouver Convention Centre. Registration: www.theyogaconference.com See display ad.

SEPT 30-OCT 15
Vancouver International Film Festival. Films from 80 countries on 10 screens. Online program available Sept. 12. Tickets, passes & discount packages on sale at the Visa Advance Box Office September 12, 1181 Seymour St. or online at www.viff.org

OCT 1
Introduction to Hand Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7.30 pm, $10; Course $350. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818 www.pacificreflexology.com

OCT 2
Burns Bog Public Tour: Learn about the history, geography, ecology and environmental importance of Burns Bog. Great family outing. Bring your rubber boots! 10-12pm. $5 each. Registration required. 604-572-0373 or info@burnsbog.org.

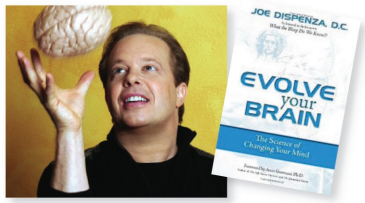
OCT 8
The Great Classical Joint Reunion / Jam 8pm, Ironworks, 235 Alexander St. Performances by Vancouver jazz artists & tribute to the Joint's owner Andreas Nothiger who nurtured local jazz for 20 years. Tickets & details: www.coastaljazz.ca/concert/great_classical_joint_reunion.

OCT 16
Common Ground Special Events presents a talk and Q&A with *Selling Sickness* co-authors Ray Moynihan (author of the new book Sex, Lies & Pharmaceuticals) and Alan Cassels. Details TBA in our October issue.

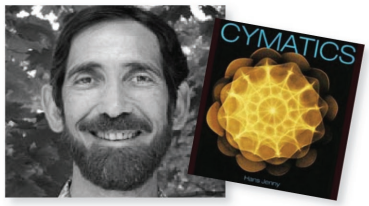
OCT 16-17 & OCT. 23-24
Become A Certified Life Coach: Build on your existing skills and life experiences. Vancouver: October 16-17, Kelowna: October 23-24. 1 (866) 455-2155, www.certifiedcoachesfederation.com

International Speaker Series
Best Selling & Award Winners

SARK, Sept 9, 7-9:30, $25
Succulent Wild Wisdom
Unity of Vancouver

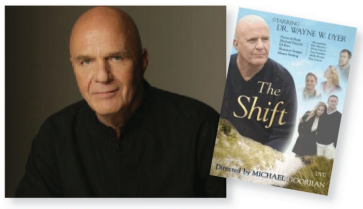


Dr. Joe Dispenza
Make a Quantum Shift
Sept 24. Lecture 7pm. $35.
Sept 25 Level 1 Workshop 9-5pm
Pinnacle Hotel, N. Vancouver
Level 2 Wrkshp Seattle Oct 1-3
Level 3 Wrkshp Vancouver Dec 3-5



Jeff Volk Sept 30, 7pm, $20
The Science of Sound
Unity of Vancouver, Lower Level
Oct 2, Day Workshop 10-4pm
Harbour Centre, Rm 1600, $89

Eliza Mada Dalian
Oct 26, 7pm $25, 6 Book Awards
Seeing Your Life's Code
Discover tools that guarantee transformation
Unity of Vancouver, Lower Level



Dr. Wayne Dyer
Nov 23, 7pm (Seed Prod)
Moving to Meaning
Queen Elizabeth Theatre
Discount Code SAGE

Science to Sage
Bella Spark productions

More events coming
Tickets: **Science to Sage (com,ca)**
BellaSpark (com)
Banyen Books
Contact: Karen 604-551-1517

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Register: **778-371-8179**
www.opendoor-yogateachertraining.ca

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events
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Thursday, September 23rd, 7:30 PM
2950 Laurel St. (at 14th), Vancouver
Pranic Healing Clinics in Vancouver
St. George's, 2950 Laurel St. (at 14th)
Tuesdays 10 AM - 2 PM & 6 - 9 PM*
Open September 14th, & 21st
The Meditation for Planetary Peace is held at the beginning of each clinic.
*Last healing begins half-hour before closing
Keep In Touch
www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver.htm

Rates & placements: classifieds@commonground.ca

Classified

OCT 22-24
Laughter Yoga Certification Training: Train to be a Laughter Leader and fill your life with fun and friendship. No yoga experience necessary. www.thesmilingyogi.com/training.htm 604-267-2789.

OCT 27
How to Respond When Someone You Love Has been Traumatized: Featuring leading expert Dr. Christine Courtois. JIBC New Westminster Campus, 7- 8:30pm. Registration required: 604.528.5608.

NOV 23
More than Entertainment - Dr Wayne Dyer, world renowned Author and Speaker will show you how to find your life's purpose and your true sense of fulfillment and joy. Experience "The Shift: Moving Ambition to Meaning". 7pm Queen Elizabeth Theatre. Tickets available at Ticket Master.

SUNDAYS

Centre for Spiritual Living: Join us every Sunday @ 11 AM for spiritual teachings and great music at #08 1880 Triumph Street (at Victoria Drive), Vancouver. Info: 604-321-1225, www.cslvancouver.com

SOS (Science of Spirituality): See Resource Directory listing in Spiritual Practices for schedule in Richmond, Vancouver & Victoria. 604-277-1247. All Welcome. www.sos.org

TUESDAYS

Potluck Event & Garden Party! Join us at 7pm the first Tues. of every Month for an organic, homemade potluck dinner. Bring something creative & enjoy our community garden in the parking lot. Ethical Kitchen, 1600 Mckay Rd., North Van. 604-988-6280. www.westonaprice.org

Reflexology Student Clinic 6-10pm. One-hour sessions $20. By appointment only. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818. www.pacificreflexology.com

WEDNESDAYS

Align yourself with the positive energies of the universe. Every Wednesday 7pm, YWCA, Room 411, 535 Hornby St. 604-317-2747 www.santmat.net Always Free.

ONGOING

ACOA Adult Children of Alcoholics &/or dysfunctional families 12 step recovery. Meet to share your experience and recovery. 604-878-8500. www.adultchildren.org

CLASSES

MASSAGE CLASSES. Thai Massage & Fusion Works (includes Hot-Stones, Balinese, Thai & more!) r.m.t.s receive 24 ceu's. www.academyofmassage.ca 1-866-537-1219.

EDUCATION

VANCOUVER COLLEGE OF REIKI SCIENCES. Training, Support. Intensives, Individual, Distant. Reiki I, Practitioner, Advanced, Master-Teacher, Aura Surgery, Chakra & Crystal Training. Manuals/Diploma. Pain & Stress Management Sessions. Call for personal treatments. Registered Teacher CRA. (604) 739-0042. www.foundationoflightinternational.ca

RETREATS

SPA FOR THE SOUL! Queenswood Retreat Centre, Victoria. Individual or group retreats. Counseling, spirituality library, trails, bodywork, pool. www.queenswoodcentre.com, 250-477-3822.

TIMBUKTU retreat centre-unique, beautiful & artistically crafted indoor and outdoor spaces. Mandala Guesthouse for seminar participants or your special vacation. www.tb2.ca

SWANWICK CENTRE, Victoria: A spectacular 32 acre oceanfront setting to reconnect with your essence through inspiring teachings, silent reflection and dialogues. www.swanwickcentre.ca / 250-744-3354.

ROOMS FOR RENT

CENTRAL SEMINAR ROOM/OFFICE: Cosy, carpeted room, seats 40. Available 24 hours, seven days/week. Natural/dimmer lighting, parking, beverage facilities, good energies. 535 West 10th avenue (at Cambie) (604) 875-8818.

MOST BEAUTIFUL **SEMINAR** ROOM IN THE WORLD. Lectures, workshops, meditation, retreats. 50 people. Very quiet, peaceful. Fully carpeted. Colours chosen by colour therapist. Full spectrum lighting. Full kitchen. Piano, sound system. Patio, summer flower, side yard. Centrally located, 23rd and Oak area, Vancouver, BC. Free parking, 604-876-9910.

OFFICE FOR RENT NEAR CAMBIE AND 5TH Avenue. Great room for consultation, planning, coaching and therapy. Seminar Room Available for classes. 604-879-5600 ext 26.

SHAMANIC COACHING

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TAROT

NEW: THE SPIRITUAL STUDY OF THE TAROT including the Kaballah, astrology, numerology and tarot. A comprehensive course. Vancouver Tarot Training Institute: Spiritual theory, practical training/supervised practice. Learn to empower clients. P/T or F/T career (certificate provided). Pain & Stress Management Sessions. Classes/individuals/correspondence/intuitive readings by phone or in person. 604-739-0042. www.foundationoflightinternational.ca

TOUR SCOTLAND'S SACRED SITES

HAVE YOU DREAMED OF EXPERIENCING the spiritual community of Findhorn, Edinburgh Castle & Rosslyn Chapel? Journey to the Standing Stones of Orkney and the Isle of Lewis. Visit the Isle of Skye and the Abbey on Iona. Enjoy Scottish hospitality in an intimate group setting. Email Sandra: singhu@shaw.ca or call 604-710-0696.

Clearmind International Institute
- Lecture Series -
Tues, Sept 14 at 7:30 pm
Evolution Revolution
with Duane & Catherine O'Kane

LOCATION: Unity of Vancouver
5840 Oak St. (near 41st and Oak)
Call 604-513-9001 or e-mail lectureticketes@clearmind.com to request complimentary tickets
www.clearmind.com

the Yoga of Sacred Song & Mantra
LIVE IN CONCERT www.DevaPremalMiten.com
DEVA PREMAL & MITEN with MANOSE

the yoga of sacred song and mantra
Sunday, Sept. 12
7:30pm Centennial Theatre
2300 Lonsdale, North Vancouver
tkts: 604-737-8858
or Centennial 604-984-4484
or www.centennialtheatre.com

Free Banyen Signings/Talks
• Jane Meredith *Aphrodite's Magic* Sept. 7 6:30-8 *in-store*

• Andrew Harvey & Karuna Erickson *Heart Yoga* Sept. 13, 7pm *at Van. Public Library*
• James Nemec *Journeys: Stories Our Bodies Tell* Sept. 16 *in-store*
• Jon Turk *Raven's Gift* Sept. 23 6:30-8 *in-store*
• David Livingstone *Living Passport* Sept. 30 6:30-8 *in-store*
••• *plus* SARK *$25 Succulent Wild Wisdom* Sept. 9 *at Unity*
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Full events info @ banyen.com

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NHPC IABT

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A whole & happy day of guilt-free fun!
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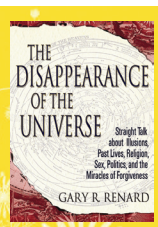
www.OnlyLovels.org
www.GaryRenard.com



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Build on your existing skills and life experiences. Learn all you need to get started as a certified coach from this concentrated and focused two-day (+ one year followup) training.

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KELOWNA
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• conserve natural resources
• access local, green business
ECO-audit.ca
604.417.2764
home of the Baby-audit

…Biotech from p. 25

ciation agrees, noting that farmers are sharing their detailed knowledge of how plants adapt to their soils and local weather with government researchers. "After a couple of days among farmers during a workshop in the Ethiopia highlands, the researcher from the national agricultural institute cried. They were tears of joy and sadness… In all his years of study in labs and formal research stations, no one had taught him to seek out the most important action in the food system: a farmer," Feyissa recounts. According to Feyissa, lack of farmer involvement in research is often the cause of problems in the first place.

The criticism faced by Monsanto and other corporations – that their GE crops are inappropriate for small farmers and local conditions – have led corporations to pay some lip service to working with small farmers, particularly in developing countries. Because they are trying to sell their GE crops in Africa and Asia and have come across the political and cultural power of small farmers, the biotech industry is trying to paint a kinder, gentler image of itself as a cooperative research partner.

The ABIC Foundation states, "Helping the developing world through agricultural biotechnology is a complex challenge. An all-encompassing solution to this enormous challenge could only be achieved by the joint efforts of all those presently trying to find an answer. That's precisely ABIC's main focus: building a better world." (www.abic.ca/abic2010/newsletter/ABIC2010-newsletter-Nov09.htm) "Helping" with GE, however, is precluded by the centrality of the profit motive and the reality that the technology is patented.

At best, genetic engineering is a distraction that diverts resources and attention away from the real solutions; the worst-case scenario is that it actually destroys the possibility of creating those real and long-lasting solutions. The more we rely on high-tech solutions, the more we place ourselves at the mercy of those corporations that own and sell them. Faris Ahmed of USC, Canada's oldest development agency, argues, "Most of all, food sovereignty is about making choices that will keep land, resources, and food production practices in the hands of those who know their landscapes best: farmers."

The future of food relies on the level of control in the hands of farmers while the success of the biotechnology industry fundamentally requires eradicating that control.

Lucy Sharratt is the coordinator of the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network. www.cban.ca

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…Olson from p. 7

intellectual resources online, the collaborative impulse of networked individuals has yet to be fully tapped.

But most ominously, the nation with the biggest global footprint of electronic media is also cursed with poor language skills. According to a study produced by the State Education Agency, more than one third of Washington, D.C. residents are functionally illiterate, unable to read much beyond past a newspaper headline. Other studies have estimated that 40 to 50 percent of US adults are functionally illiterate. Is this a measure of the state of US public education or the domination of image over text, as Postmanites might argue? Or is it part of a general civic decline, unavoidable for a nation that blows half its yearly federal budget on military bling?

There is a related possibility: the elite class has abandoned any pretence of supporting an informed, intelligent public at home, preferring to prosecute ruinous wars abroad for private profit. There is nothing to stop an Orwellian system from using Huxleyan means of control – anaesthetizing the population through high-tech distractions and mood-altering drugs – a point Postman himself conceded.

Not surprisingly, the neo-Luddite author entitled his last book *Building a Bridge to the 18th Century.* He exited the 21st century as a brilliant, curmudgeonly moralist, a man who refused to believe that technology is as ambiguous in nature as the messy, complicated beings that create it.

The flip side of "amusing ourselves to death" is 'informing ourselves to life.' Will the new consumer technologies and high-definition, digital broadcasting converge into a monolith of mass distraction and individual manipulation worthy of *Brave New World*? Will we entertain ourselves right onto the mortician's slab, our cold, dead fingers wrapped around iPhones and Crackberries? Or will our tools escape from the toolmakers' control and offer activists the ongoing opportunity to speak truth to power and address a growing democratic deficit, and back-engineer face-to-face community?

From the way things are going, I suspect the future will turn out to be some kind of crazy-quilt combination of the above. Some of us will shake ourselves awake while others will descend deeper into the mass dream. As for the thousand-channel universe, parts of it will continue to improve in quality, while other parts worsen, as the digital age approaches some kind of "singularity."

Since its creation in the late forties, the boob tube has yet to prove its mettle as our servant. But heaven help us if TV successfully mates with the Internet in the new millennium and the offspring becomes our master.

www.geoffolson.com

On Track Zodiac

SEPTEMBER 2010 Adrien Dilon

ARIES (Mar 21 – Apr 19)
You are not one for being coy unless your motive is to feel the subtle rapture of another's affection. Prose and praise have descended from the divine mouth of creativity and you can utilize what is needed to inspire those you desire.

TAURUS (Apr 20 – May 21)
Friendship means the world to you and you want a thick icing of trust and loyalty. The phrase "keep your friends close and your enemies closer" doesn't fly with you. This is a time for true communication and flexibility. You will benefit greatly as you give of your time to those who are deserving.

GEMINI (May 22 – Jun 20)
If you feel particularly more emotional than usual, just hold on to your hat. The feeling of being overwhelmed may cause you to react too severely. This storm will not last much longer. If you use the energy at hand, you can also accomplish much.

CANCER (Jun 21 – Jul 22)
Your mind has settled on the idea for a change and you will make the shift smoothly. There is no rush; when you are ready, you will simply be in a different place. This is a time to muse and reflect.

LEO (Jul 23 – Aug 22)
You might want to consult someone whose expertise and wisdom are different than yours. Someone you respect and regard highly will assist you if you seek them out. This is a time to gather knowledge from elders. Listen, take notes and challenge yourself.

VIRGO (Aug 23 – Sep 22)
Your desire to become more established in your field of work might be a real concern now. Moving as slowly as a fox and steadfast as a wolf, your time will come bringing the reward of achievement and something to feel proud about. Be resolute.

LIBRA (Sep 23 – Oct 22)
You may very well feel that it is time to take out the garbage, figuratively, emotionally and physically. Enjoy tossing out and disregarding anything that doesn't belong to you and which isn't healthy to have in your life. Some things simply have their expiration date.

SCORPIO (Oct 23 – Nov 21)
You may feel like a stranger in a crowd and although you could be a bit of a hermit, you have found a happy medium to allow more comfort in what is uniquely your style of living. There is no pressure from anyone else as you blend into life on your own terms.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22 - Dec 21)
You may enjoy setting goals and the benefits of a job well done and a sense of personal artistry. Starting and finishing within a deadline is the very thing you might need in your creative resume arsenal. Seize every opportunity to flourish.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 19)
Although 'doing' an activity is not meditation, there is a time for both and action will blend with silence. Meditation will support you and illumination is near. The pathways to well-being are extending and inviting you toward a spiritual breakthrough.

AQUARIUS (Jan 20 – Feb 19)
Family life continues to create happiness and fulfilment. If you are without close community, you will want to seek it out. Being around others – nature, pets, anything with the capacity to love and be loved – and spending time in nature really creates a spark that ignites your joie de vivre.

PISCES (Feb 20 – Mar 20)
Researching and discovering more ways to leave a less noxious footprint on the Earth may excite you. All things happen to all people and you wish to blend health with wealth and be well informed. Your compassion soars, as does your desire to continue to do what you love and love what you do.

Adrien Dilon is a clairvoyant consultant and author with 35 years experience in astrology, multi-media art and healing, adrien.dilon@gmail.com.

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Upcoming info sessions at Main Campus, 100 West 49th Ave, Vancouver from 7pm-8:30pm unless otherwise noted.

Advanced Integrative Energy Healing (NEW)
This unique approach focuses on advanced multidimensional healing techniques to improve health and healing. Special entry for Health Care Professionals. Certificate pending.
Info Session: Sept 8

Integrative Energy Healing
This three-year program combines ancient eastern practices with western teachings and recent scientific discoveries.
Info Session: Sept 8, Sept 22 & Oct 13

Cranial Sacral Therapy
Gain therapeutic manual skills to heal based on anatomy and physiology. This gentle healing art is practiced by health care professionals. **Info Session: Sept 9**

Expressive Arts Therapy
The only integrative arts-based psychotherapy training in BC. Train to be an Expressive Arts Therapist within a range of educational, clinical, and community settings.
Info Session: Sept 13, 6-7:30pm

Fashion & Image
This program combines a variety of disciplines including fashion, style, wardrobe, hair and make-up. Visit the website or e-mail for an information guide.

Shiatsu Therapy
Develop the power of touch and learn the tools to establish a successful professional practice. Visit the website or e-mail for an information guide.

Spa Therapy & Holistic Massage
Benefit from 1000 hours of massage training including Thai Massage, Swedish Massage and Aromatherapy.
Info Session: Oct 20 & Nov 17

Advanced Yoga Teacher Training (NEW)
Become a transformational teacher by advancing your wisdom and experience. Gain 350 hours of expert training and a hands-on practicum. Certificate pending.
Info Session: Sept 21 & Nov 10

Yoga Teacher Training
This part-time program gives 250 hours of training in various aspects of classical and contemporary yogic practices.
Visit the website or e-mail for an information guide.

Naseem Gulamhusein
Yoga Teacher Training Program Coordinator

GENUINE HEALTH | *it shows*

transform your body.
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The superior way to build lean muscle, lose fat, increase energy + enjoy life.

New **transform+ pulse** is a potent combination of the research proven superfood **greens+** and the highest quality proteins on the market. It delivers energy and vitality with the phytonutrient and antioxidant rich **greens+**. And provides all the essential and non-essential amino acids your body needs from our premium blend of alpha+™ whey protein isolate and new pulse plant proteins. They're research proven to support body transformation by increasing lean body mass and energy, improving exercise recovery, as well as boosting your metabolism and immune system.

Derived from non-GMO yellow pea, faba bean, flaxseed and organic hemp, our Canadian grown pulse plant™ proteins are the most bio-available and easy to digest proteins on the market. They are highly nutritious and offer a soy-protein-free alternative. For those aspiring to have the leanest, healthiest body possible, **transform+ pulse** is what you've been waiting for.

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